THE NEW YORK LEDGER

DEVOTED TO CHOICE LITERATURE ROMANCE THE NEWS COMMERCE

VOL. XVII. R. BONNER, EDITOR AND PROPRIETOR, NO. 40 PARK ROW. NEW YORK, JUNE 15, 1861. TERMS, $2 PER ANNUM, IN ADVANCE. NO. 15.

BENEDICTION.

BY MARY FORREST.

Thou, with dim, appealing eyes,
Gazing out on twilight skies,
Where the golden sunlight dies:

Weary-hearted, dreaming o'er
Fairy footsteps gone before,
Wading through the gold of yore:

Stay thy weeping! Turn away
From the visions, grim and gray,
That meet and chill thee, day by day.

Cast thy hands out through the mist,
Till thy finger tips are kissed
By that hope thy spirit missed.

There are vales of greenest youth,
Wet with dews of sweetest ruth,
Bright with suns of living truth,

Smiling 'mid the sands of care,
Soothing with their balmy air,
Beautiful with blossoms fair!

By the light of yonder star—
Some pure spirit's jewelled car
Gleaming softly from afar—

Wingèd prayers each night ascend
Where the azure arches bend,
Where the shining seraphs blend.

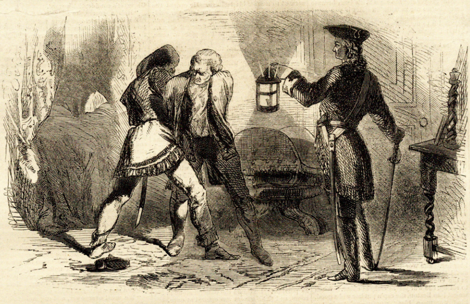
Meekly in the Presence bow!
Rushing wings are bringing now
Cooling to thy burning brow.

Let their pinions fold above
All the blackness Fate hath wove
In thy golden warp of love.

God hath use, beloved one,
For the brightness He hath won
From the glory of thy sun.

Weep not, dream not, but be strong
With the calm achieving throng,
Do the right, and ban the wrong.

[Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1861, by Robert Bonner, in the Clerk's Office of the District Court for the Southern District of New York.]



CAPTURING A PRIZE.

MAGGIE BURNS,

THE HEROINE OF THE DELAWARE.

A STORY OF AMERICAN HEARTS OF '76.

BY SYLVANUS COBB, JR.

CHAPTER VII.

RODERIC MEETS HIS UNCLE AGAIN.

The place where Roderic and his party had stopped was at the south-east corner of the park, and directly at the foot of the slope upon which the hall was situated. The shade trees were thick in that locality, and it was, altogether, a gloomsome place. Our hero stood upon the edge of the road, with a pistol in his hand, ready to hail the coming stranger. At length the footsteps drew near, and the outlines of a human form were visible close at hand. There was but one person, and he seemed to be plodding along in a meditative mood; but he jumped quickly enough when Roderic spoke to him.

"Hallo! Who goes there?"

"O!—o-oh!—Don't! Good Lord bress ye! Ah-yah! dis yer chile don't gone for to be a Rebbel!"

"Cato—is that you?"

"O, bress de Lord ob heb'n, it aint anybody but me! I'se agwine for to hurt nobody. I haint done no mischief to nobody—I haint."

"Hush! Don't make such a noise. It's only I, Cato; and I'm glad I've found you."

"What! Is it Mas'r Roderic?"

"Yes."

"O—oh! Bress my poor brack soul, how you did skeer me. I fou't it was an enemy. O—o-oh—dese yer is awful times, mas'r. Ebery-body is a gettin' killed."

"And who's killed now?"

"O—ya!—lots ob folks. Down to Missus Burns's dar's been a lot killed, an' in de woods dar's been a lot more killed. O, it's awful! I s'pecs ebery minnet when dis yer chile 'll git killed!"

Roderic succeeded in so far quieting the negro's fears that he could talk with some degree of understanding; and then he inquired concerning his uncle.

"Mas'r Roderic," said Cato, speaking very carefully, as though he would not have even the trees hear what he said, "don't ye go for to ventur' nigh yer uncle. He'll kill ye if ye do."

"What makes you think so?"

"O—he's dreffful mad. I nebber seed him so mad afore. He says dat he'll hab you in his power if he can. Don't ye go a nigh him."

"Very well,—we'll see about that. But I'm thankful to you, Cato, for your information, only I want a little more of it. I want to know who is at the hall besides my uncle."

"Dey's all dar, mas'r."

"And who is all?"

"Why—all dem blamed ole Tories. Capt'n Griswold is dar, an' de whole lot ob 'em."

"Do you know how many in all?"

"I couldn't tell 'zactly Dar's been some new ones come to-day."

"Whereabouts in the hall are they?"

"Dey's all in the great store-room, back ob de kitchen."

"And now, Cato, where are you bound?"

"I'se gwine down to Missus Burns's."

"For what?"

"To see who's dar. Mas'r Glengyle wants to know. He's heer'd dat ole Hecuba an' Scipio am dar, an' if so be, he wants to see 'em."

"Then go ahead, but mind that you say nothing of having met me here."

Cato promised to keep his own counsel, at the same time intimating that his own good might require it. And then he once more urged Roderic not to go near his uncle; but the youth dismissed him with the assurance that he would look out for his own safety.

As soon as the negro was gone Roderic rejoined his companions, and told them that the work was all plain before them.

"I am only fearful," he said, "that the labor of capturing the rascals will not be commensurate with the value of the prize. However, we will not make unnecessary work. I can lead you directly to the spot where they are, and we'll take them by surprise."

Let us, before our friends move any further, look in at the hall. John Glengyle had sent Cato away upon his errand, and was left alone with Louis Griswold.

"I think," said the host, "that Roderic and the widow must have gone to Newtown."

"Very likely," returned the captain.

"And," pursued Sir John, "the young scamp will, in all probability, reveal the fact that you and your men are quartered here."

"It would be like him. Egad, Sir John, if he were not a relative of yours, I should be tempted to shoot him the next time I saw him."

"My dear Captain, don't let this relationship stand in the way of your duty to your king. From this time I forget that Roderic Glengyle is my nephew. The love I have borne him I bear him no more. He is to me as a Rebel, and nothing more."

"Ah," cried the doughty captain, slapping his sword-hilt jauntily; "if I have your forgiveness in advance, I shall most certainly put a hole through him upon the first opportunity. So you may set it down that the young Rebel is a spotted man. Egad, I only hope that I may meet him."

It may be that John Glengyle believed that Louis Griswold was a brave man; and Louis Griswold may have believed that John Glengyle had loved his nephew. At all events, neither called in question the assertions of the other; and, at a proposition from the host, they drank some brandy together. They had drunk several times before, and the captain's tongue was becoming loose.

"Sir John," he said with a nod and a wink, "what the deuse do you want of that old witch?"

"Eh?" muttered the baronet, looking up. He had been meditating, and did not seem to understand the question.

"What do you want of old Hecuba?"

"Want?—Nothing."

"Then why are you so particular about her?"

"Never mind that, now, Captain. I have my own reasons for wishing to see her."

"She never was a flame of yours, Sir John."

"Peace! You are going beyond your province."

"Eh,—excuse me. I meant no harm."

"No harm has been done, sir. Only, in the future, don't pry into my private affairs."

Griswold realized that he had touched his host in a tender spot, and he thought the best way to get out of it would be, to leave; so he said that he would go and look after his company, and then retire.

"Hark!" uttered Sir John. "What is that noise?"

"Eh?—Where?"

"There is disturbance among your men. Some of them may be drunk."

"Egad, let me catch one of them drunk, and I'll discharge him. I can't have that kind of nuisance around me. I'll go directly and see."

Griswold went with all possible haste to the room where his men were quartered. It was at some distance from the drawing-rooms, being in a rear wing of the building; and before he reached it he realized that something of unusual moment was taking place. He rushed in by the door that opened from the inner passage, expecting to find his men engaged in a general row; but, when his eye rested upon the scene, he stopped as though he had been shot. One half of his men were bound, and the other half were being overcome. He saw Roderic Glengyle, with a score, or more, of stout, resolute fellows at his back; and he saw, too, that resistance would be in vain. He saw all this in a very few seconds, and then, ere harm could befall him, he dodged back, and fled through the passage. He did not return to the drawing-room, for Roderic Glengyle might go there. No,—he followed a safer plan. He ran out by a back way, creeping through a window in the carriage-house; and made off into the road.

Roderic had led his men directly to the room where the Tories were quartered, and had burst in upon them without warning of any kind. Part of them were asleep when the Patriots came in, and part of them were playing cards. A few made some resistance; and one or two of them fought stoutly; but they were taken at so great a disadvantage, that even the brave ones were forced to submit without any of the honors of battle. There were thirty of the royalists; all taken prisoners, and no wounds given or received, save a few bruises.

But where was the Tory captain?

"We must not lose him," said Roderic.

"You won't find him," returned one of the prisoners—one who had fought the hardest in self-defence."

"Why not? Has he gone?"

"Yes," cried the prisoner, in a tone of derision, "he's gone as a coward goes. He came and looked in at the door while you were binding us, and then fled."

"I may find him with my uncle. I'll go and see."

"You'll be more likely to find him in the woods."

Roderic did not doubt the truth of the man's estimation of Griswold's character; but he chose not to argue with him. He gave his lieutenant directions to remain where he was, with the prisoners; remarking, by way of explanation:

"I wish to see my uncle, whether Griswold has taken refuge with him or not. I will not be gone long. You will wait here until I come back."

Thus speaking our hero withdrew and proceeded directly to the drawing-room where the host generally sat. Sir John was there, apparently waiting for the return of Griswold; for he was pacing uneasily up and down the apartment, ever and anon listening, as though to hear if the confusion in the soldiers' quarters had been entirely quelled.

"Well, Captain," he cried, as the door was opened, "what was the——"

Thus far had he spoken when he discovered his mistake. He started back a pace, and for a moment astonishment and rage seemed to be contending for the mastery within him.

"Roderic Glengyle," he at length exclaimed, "is this you?"

"It is I, sir, as you see."

There was a sword upon the table, and the host moved quickly up and took it from its scabbard.

"That is right, sir," said Roderic, with a bitter curl of the lip. "It is well that you should be armed; but let me advise you to be careful how you use your weapon."

"Ingrate! Rebel! Traitor!" cried Sir John, with an impotent stamp of the foot, "how dare you come back here? Have you come to acknowledge your error?"

"No,—I have come to Waldvale to repair a wrong; and I have sought you for the purpose of asking a question. And, sir," pursued Roderic, in a more quiet and earnest tone, "for the time—for a few moments—let us forget that there is any difference between us, for I would be candid and sincere."

"First," interrupted the host, beginning to regain his senses, "tell me what is the meaning of all the confusion I have heard."

"I encountered a few of your strange guests; that was all, sir."

"And have you been killing more of them?"

"No. I got by them this time without any such necessity. But I'll explain that at another time. For the present will you listen to me, and be frank. These are troublous, uncertain times; and we know not what a day may bring forth. I may never see you again; and before we part I wish to know something of my parents. Until I grew up to man's estate I supposed you were my father; but that illusion has been dispelled, and I now ask you to tell me who and what my parents were."

"What has put this thing into your head?" returned Sir John, eyeing his nephew sharply.

"It is nothing new," answered Roderic. "I have asked you the same question a hundred times, and you have always put me off."

"And now you want a direct answer, do you?"

"I do."

Sir John took a turn across the room, and when he came back he stopped and looked into his nephew's face. There was wickedness in that look, and the curl of the lip told that there was malignity in it too.

"Boy," he said, "if I have hesitated to tell you concerning your parentage, it has been because I would not drag up from the past memories that wound my own pride. But now, if you will, the truth shall be spoken. Your father was my brother; and he forsook you almost as soon as you were born. He was poor and broken down; and I remember him more in pity than in anger. He died while you were an infant. Some said that he took his own life; while others said that his death was an accident; but I never sought to unravel the mystery. He is dead, and I am willing that he should rest in peace. Further than this, touching your father, my lips are sealed."

"And my mother?"

"Of your mother," continued Sir John, the wicked look becoming more intense, "I will not speak. If she had never been born it had been better for us all. If your father had never seen her, he might have been a happy, prosperous man. In short, had your father never seen that woman, there might have been no shame upon him; and I should not have had a thing of shame bearing my family name!"

"Just Heavens!" gasped the youth, struggling with the emotion that almost choked him, "this cannot be. John Glengyle, you have lied to me!"

"Would that it could be so," said the baronet, with a show of sincerity; "but, alas, no such healing unction can I lay to my soul. If I could feel that it was all a lie which I have spoken, I should be a happier man than I am now. But, Master Roderic, the history of your parents is written, and not a line can be altered. If you would not be driven mad with shame, ask me no more."

Roderic moved back against the wall, and pressed his hand upon his brow; but he would not display a weakness before his uncle if he could help it; for he saw plainly enough that his uncle gloated over the pain his revelation had given.

"John Glengyle," he said, standing erect, and looking once more through eyes undimmed, "if this be true as you have said, then I will carve out a name for myself. I ask not honor from you; I seek it not from your family record; I will earn it as other brave men have earned it."

"You will earn it in this rebel cause, eh?"

"I will earn it in fighting for the liberty of my country."

"And," added the uncle, with coarse sarcasm, "you will end your life upon a gibbet, where all traitors to the king must sooner or later arrive."

"Enjoy your own opinion, sir; and with that opinion I leave you."

"Hold!" cried the host, as his nephew turned towards the door, "you must not leave me quite yet. I think I have a reckoning with you. You are more than a rebel. You have raised your hand against the subjects of your king."

"*Your* king—not MINE!" returned Roderic. "I owe no allegiance to the imbecile tyrant; and against all who would rivet his hateful chains upon America my hands are raised openly and boldly, even to the death. Against you, sir, who have cared for my childhood, I would not strike the battle blow; and so I will strive to keep clear of you. It will be well, however, if you are equally careful to keep clear of me."

John Glengyle fancied that he had the lead in his own hand; so he lay back upon his authority.

"Not so fast, young Hotspur. You will not keep clear of me so easily. You escaped me once; but you may not do it again. You shall not leave Waldvale to-night!"

"I am going now, sir," returned Roderic, moving towards the door.

"Beware, boy!" If you move you move at your peril! I have a large force at hand, which can be called very quickly. And, moreover, you will not escape as you did before. The royalists know that you have slain several of their number, and they will be likely to meet you with some idea of revenge, if they are set upon you."

"Poor old man, in pity I have spared you. Know that every other Tory in this house is at this moment bound, and under charge of my own brave companions. I hold a commission from George Washington, and this is my first essay in behalf of my suffering country. Now, sir, let me bid you beware!"

With this Roderic turned from the apartment, and hastened towards the place where he had left his prisoners. He did not wish to hold further talk with his uncle, for he knew that it could only be productive of bitter, and more bitter, feelings. He reached the large store-room; and his company had just marched out, with the captured Tories in charge, when Sir John came rushing after him. It was no time for bandying words, and the young Patriot drew his sword, and brought his foot down upon the floor with a vehemence that stopped the host, and made him start.

"Not a word, John Glengyle! I have heard enough. If you cross me here—if you speak but a single syllable of your treason—I'll arrest you, and bind you, and carry you to the American camp a prisoner! If you are wise, you will spare me this."

John Glengyle had not the hardihood to face the look of his nephew as it was bent upon him then, and he shrank back. Roderic did not wait to tempt him further; but departed from the house, and led his company away.

When out upon the road, and left to his own thoughts, our hero naturally referred to the revelation he had that night heard touching his parents. For half an hour he remained thus alone, troubled to the very soul with the painful imaginings that arose within him. But what was the use? If it was true as his uncle had said, how could he help it? And yet, he could not believe it.

"He has lied to me. It is a foul slander upon my mother. O, I know it—I feel it in my soul. John Glengyle speaks falsely; and I'll not believe him. No, no—I tear out forever the record of his base words, and in the place thereof I take back my mother's memory, pure and spotless. So be it evermore!"

And then Roderic Glengyle rejoined his lieutenant.

CHAPTER VIII.

A WONDERFUL REVELATION!

On his return, Roderic took a more direct route than that by which he had come, reaching Newtown an hour after midnight. In the morning he reported himself at head-quarters, and received the warmest encomiums from the commander-in-chief.

"And now," said Washington, "I have further work for you. General Mercer will give you instructions. Go to him at once. I have the utmost confidence in your patriotism, and your success in the adventure of last night shows to me that you are to be relied upon. I trust that your next report may be as favorable as the one you have now made."

"If I do not succeed," replied Roderic, modestly, but yet with enthusiasm, "it shall not be from want of the will to do my duty."

"I believe you, sir, and I would give you the instructions myself, were it not that I have other business upon my hands."

With this our hero left the presence of the commander-in-chief, and went directly to the quarters of General Mercer, whom he found just getting up from the breakfast table.

Had Captain Glengyle been to breakfast?

No.

Then he must eat. And, to keep him company, his host sat down again and sipped a cup of coffee. While at the meal, Roderic related the circumstances attending the capture of the thirty Tories, so that when he arose from the table they were ready for business.

"Washington told you to come to me?" said Mercer, after they had reached his private room.

"Yes," replied our hero. "He said you had orders for me."

"Exactly, and so I have—important ones. Since yesterday we have heard something of your former life and habits, and I will simply say, touching the character thereof, that it has led us to place the most implicit confidence in your patriotism, and also in your reliability. And, further than this, we know that you are well acquainted in this section of the country—acquainted with all its highways and byways."

"That is so, sir," returned the youth. "And as for the rest of your remark, time shall tell."

"So be it. And now, my dear Captain, here it is—mind you, this is in confidence: Washington is about to strike a blow which the enemy little expect, and if he succeeds, the present threatening run of the tide may be effectually turned. But of this you shall know more in the future. In the meantime, it is necessary that we should look to the dangers that beset us upon this side of the Delaware. We have received information that a British officer—it is said that he is a major, and has been attached to Cornwallis's staff—is somewhere in this region, enlisting men and gaining information. If such an officer is here in disguise, and has a score or more of men ready and willing to obey him, he may prove a very dangerous customer, for, in the plan which our commander-in-chief has on foot, there must necessarily be some preliminary preparation, and a shrewd officer may, from very slight notes, gain such an inkling of our project as to lead him to a solution of the whole. I will tell you the exact information that I have gained, and if I do not tell you the source whence it came, you will not feel aggrieved, since I promised that the name of the informer should not pass my lips. Thus it is:

"The British officer is supposed to be a Major Whittlesly, and he has been seen in conference with Louis Griswold. He has several agents, and has succeeded in enlisting quite a number of men—perhaps a hundred, and may be more. And we fear that many of these men are spies. We have reason to believe that they are often in our camp, and that all our movements come under their eyes. And yet they must have a rendezvous somewhere. There must be some place where their chieftain holds court. If it could be found, the whole gang will be captured. Do you understand me?"

"I think I do," replied Roderic.

"And are you willing to embark upon the enterprise?"

"Yes, sir. I am ready to go into the work with my whole soul. I will find the British interloper if it be a possible thing."

"It must be done as soon as possible," said Mercer.

"The sooner the better for me," returned Roderic.

"The men already under your command you will use as you have need; and when you want more, you have only to call for them."

After a few more words of consultation, our hero took his leave, promising to make report as soon as he had anything of importance to communicate. He knew that he had been selected for this important work on account of his acquaintance with the people and localities of that region of country; but he had not told how much he knew.

Roderic proceeded directly to the village, and was soon beneath the roof of the honest smith, where he had to relate his adventure over again. Moses Allen was loud in his enthusiastic praises; but the gratitude of Maggie Burns was deeper and more touching. She placed her hand within her lover's grasp, and blessed him for the joy he had given her.

"O," she added, with soul-born earnestness, "I wish there was some capacity in which I could serve my country in this hour of her great need."

"By my life, dear Maggie," returned Roderic, warmly, "I should think you had already proved your devotion, and done some service. And, further,—the influence of such souls as yours is a source of vast power in a nation. Your simple words to my men have added one half to their strength of purpose."

"I thank you for your kind assurance, Roderic, and I only hope that I may be able to do some more signal service."

"We will both of us do all we can, Maggie."

"Aye, that we will. But you have intimated that you had other work on your hands."

"Yes," replied the youth. And he then went on and told her of the mission which Mercer had given him. "Last night," he continued, after he had explained to her all the instruction he had received, "I was sorry that Griswold had escaped me; it worried me considerably, but now I feel that it may have been all for the best. I think I have a clue to the whereabouts of this Major Whittlesly. I am sure he is one of those who have been visiting at Waldvale, and if such is the case, I may find him without much difficulty. And, furthermore, Louis Griswold will be sure to be in communication with him, so, you see, I may have a double clue."

"When will you start?"

"Not until this evening. I have something of my own to occupy my mind to-day. I am going to see Hecuba. You look surprised."

"Not surprised, Roderic, though I may feel inquisitive."

"And yet, dear Maggie, I don't think I could tell you why I am going. I can hardly explain it to myself. But I must see that woman again. Her image has been in my mind continually, and I cannot rid myself of it. In fact, it is more than a curiosity on my part. It is— But I cannot explain it. I must see her. I shall go out to the cot this forenoon, and return as soon as I can. I will see you when I come back."

Maggie might have asked more questions, but she seemed to be suddenly engaged with thoughts of her own, so their conversation extended but little further.

Touching the visit to the cot, it was as Roderic had said. He felt an irresistible impulse to see Hecuba, and yet he could not explain whence it came. There was something in the saddening shadows upon her face, and in the plaintive tones of her voice, that had so fixed his thoughts and feelings, that he could not shake the impression off, and he meant to see her—to see old Scipio—and find out, if possible, whether there could be any bond of natural sympathy between them. Before he left the blacksmith's house, he asked Maggie what she was thinking about.

"You are not fearing danger to me, dear one?"

"No," she replied, "for I have assurance that you will not expose yourself to danger needlessly. No—I was thinking of something else, but it is of no consequence now. It was only a woman's whim,"

Roderic knew better than that, though he was not so impolite as to say so, for he saw, by the intensity of the maiden's look, that her cogitations were of no ordinary character. However, he would not press her, so he bade her good morning and took his leave. He did not apprehend any danger in visiting the cot, but, that he might be on the safe side, he took his sergeant and three men with him, leaving the rest of the company with the lieutenant. He reached the widow's dwelling an hour before noon, and having satisfied himself that there were no interlopers within, he directed his companions to keep watch without while he was gone.

When Roderic entered the little sitting-room, he found the maniac woman and the old negro both there. Hecuba looked up as he entered, and quickly arose to her feet.

"Ah," she said, advancing towards him, "it is Hector again. O, I thought you were dead, my son. They told me the cruel Greek had slain you. Why have you kept me so long in agony? It was cruel!"

The season of repose had so far subdued the woman's wild look, that, but for the uncertain wandering of the eye, she might have worn an expression of intellectual beauty. As it was, her face gave token of much wealth hidden somewhere within. Roderic took her hand and led her back to her seat, and then drew a chair to her side.

"You may call me Hector," he said, "but you must not blame me for having staid so long away. I have been fighting for my country."

"And you were not killed?"

"No. I have been preserved, as you see."

"But how can it be? You were dead once, for I remember that I saw your body all bloody and stiff."

And so she talked on for half an hour or more, Roderic never once contradicting her, but striving to keep her in as pleasant a frame of mind as possible. It was evident that she had conceived a strong affection for him, and she manifested it so tenderly, and with such touching pathos, that more than once he found the tears starting to his eyes. The more he gazed upon her, and the more he heard her plaintive voice, the deeper grew the feeling of sympathy that had already taken possession of his soul. He loved the woman—loved her with more than sympathy—with more than mere benevolence. Despite her insanity, there was much in her presence, both of look and speech, that awoke new and strange emotions within him. But from her he could not hope to gain information. He had touched upon the story of her life, but she did not answer him to his wish. She only whispered of the trials and sorrows of the Trojan queen, seeming to have no idea of any other character. She was Hecuba, the wife of Priam, and the mother of Paris and Hector, and she would not own any other thought of the past.

"Ah," said Scipio, speaking in a whisper, and shaking his head, "it ain't no use, mas'r. She don't know what she's talkin' about."

Roderic had come to this conclusion already, and, as he wished to converse with the negro awhile, Hecuba was persuaded to retire to her bedroom. She was not at first inclined to go, but finally, under the lead of her faithful attendant, she went, and lay down upon her bed.

"Now, good Scipio, I must know that woman's story. Tell me what you can. I will be her friend—I will be your friend."

The old negro hesitated.

"Do you fear to trust me?" asked Roderic.

"No, mas'r, I aint afeard o' dat. I wur only t'inkin', dat's all."

"Then tell me the story. How long have you known this poor woman?"

"Eber since she's been here."

"And where did you first know her?"

Again Scipio hesitated. He sat for a while with his hands over his face, and when he finally looked up, his countenance wore a more composed expression.

"Mas'r Roderic Glengyle," he said, in a slow and solemn tone, "if I've been pertickeler 'bout keepin' dis yer story to myself, it's been because dere'd be no use in tellin' it. But if you must hab it, I shan't refuse it."

"Tell it to me, Scipio."

"If I begin it, I shall tell it all, mas'r. I shan't make no half-way work wid it."

"Go on. I want it all."

Once more the old man seemed inclined to hesitate, but at a look from the youth, he went on.

"Now jes' you listen, Mas'r Roderic, an' I'll gib ye de whole t'ing jest as it am." He cast his eyes towards the bedroom door, and then added, "An' I'm gwine to tell it because dar may be need ob help 'fore long. Howsumebber, dat ain't de story. But dis yer am it:

"It's twenty years ago, mas'r—twenty years last summer, in de month ob August, dat I wur cook an' steward on board de barque Baron. We was a comin' from England to America—from Bristol to Boston—an' we was jes' about half way across de ocean, when, one mornin', jes' as de day wur a breakin', we found a man an' a woman floatin' on a plank. We lowered a boat, an' picked 'em up, an' did all we could for 'em. But it wa'n't o' no use. De man wur so far gone dat dar wasn't bref enough in him to hold on to, an' he nebber spoke arter we got him out ob de water. He died afore he wur fairly dry. But de woman lived. Ye see, de man had spent all his soul an' body for de woman. I spec's he'd held onto her, an' kept her 'bove water, widout t'inkin' ob hisself; 'cause, ye see, dat yer woman wur his own wife, an' he t'ought more ob her dan he did ob his life. Well, de woman, when she knowed dat her husband wur dead, took on drefful. It made all hands cry to hear her. She wur took sick right off—had an awful fever—was sick a long time—ravin' mad as she could be—an' when she finally got able to set up, she wur jes' as crazy as ebber. When we got into Boston, the cap'n put her wid a good, kind woman—a black woman—an' made me promise dat I'd look arter her. An' I hab done so. Ye see, de reason why de cap'n made me stay wid her was, because I'd took care ob her all t'rough her sickness, an' I wur de only one she seemed to know. When I wur gone, she cried for me, jes' as though she t'ought I wur her only friend. An', Mas'r Roderic, I've been wid her ebber since. Sometimes, in de summer, I've been to sea, when she's had a good home to stop at; but I haint nebber left her to de care ob strangers. I lub her—I can't help it; if it hadn't been so, I shouldn't hab staid wid her as I hab. Dat yer's her story."

"But," said Robert, "has she had no lucid intervals?"

"Any what, mas'r?"

"Haven't there been times when she has had her senses?"

"No—not since she wur fust took."

"But how was it when she was first picked up—before she knew that her husband was dead? Did she not give some account of herself?"

"I s'pec's," replied Scipio, speaking very carefully, "dat she tumbled overboard from a ship dat wur ahead ob us—dat she tumbled over in de night."

"But did you learn nothing more? Did you not find out her name?"

"I t'ink," said the negro, with his head bowed, "dat I said I would tell you eberyt'ing."

"Certainly you did, Scipio."

"Den I'll keep my word, an' tell you de truf. We did find out her name; an' we found out more, too. She had a child—a little baby—but we couldn't make out whedder dat child tumbled overboard wid 'em, or whedder it wur left aboard de ship she wur in; but I s'pec's it wur left aboard de ship."

"And her name?"

"Her name, Mas'r Roderic, was jes' de same as yours."

"What!—was it GLENGYLE?"

"Yes."

"You are sure?"

"Jes' as sartin as I am dat my name is Scipio. De cap'n ob our barque, when he got to Boston, had some t'ings dat he found in de man's pockets, an' he kept 'em a long time, hopin' dat he'd find out sum'f'n; but he couldn't. Dat cap'n 's dead now, an' I don't know what's become ob de t'ings he had; but I haint forgot de names. I'll tell 'em to ye. De man's name was ARTHUR GLENGYLE, an' de woman's name was HELEN."

Roderic started to his feet, and clasped his hands upon his brow. A moment he stood thus, and then he caught the old negro by the shoulders.

"Scipio," he cried, "my father's name was Arthur Glengyle; and, as God is my judge, I do believe this woman is my mother!"

"Set down—set right down, Mas'r Roderic. Bress de Lord, I s'pected dat ar'—I did, for sartin. Arter you went away poor ole Hecuba run on 'bout ye till I fou't my eyes would run over wid tears. An' den, ye see, de 'squire up to de Hall—Sir John, dey call 'im—he's been so berry 'tickeler 'bout findin' out how long we was gwine to stay here, an' all dat kind ob stuff. Once—more'n six years ago, I reckon—Hecuba seed Sir John, an' he seed her; but dey wasn't whar dey could speak. She come berry nigh killin' herself den wid ravin', an' she said enough to make me t'ink dat dat ar' man wur some relation to her husband. Well, d'ye see, last night a black man, named Cato, come here to inquire 'bout Hecuba, an' him an' me had a long talk. He's a servant ob Sir John, but he berry soon come to be my friend, an' he told me all he know'd. He told me all 'bout you; an' when he said dat John Glengyle wur yer uncle, an', furdermore, dat you'd always s'pected he wur yer father till a berry little time ago—when I heerd dis I 'gan to 'spect sum'f'n queer. I ask'd Cato how old ye wur, and he said 'bout twenty-two. Den I ask'd if ye wur born in dis yer country; an' he said he reckoned not. He said yer uncle brought ye here when ye wur a baby. Den, ye see, when I put all dese t'ings togedder, I 'gan to smell sum'f'n berry wonderful like. Says I to myself—mayn't dis yer Roderic be de berry baby dat de poor woman cried about? Don't ye see, mas'r?"

"Merciful Heaven!" gasped the youth, with his hands once more upon his face, "I do see! But what can I do! O, what can I do!"

"You must keep calm, Mas'r Roderic."

"But I must see her once more!"

"Not now,—I wouldn't see her now. Wait till you be more yerself. I'll take good care ob her. She shan't suffer. Come agin—some odder time. Come to-morrer—or next day."

"But," said Roderic, with a start, "what may Sir John have in mind. Why has he sent down here to make inquiries concerning her?"

"I'll look out for him, sar. Old Cato's promised to let me know if dar's anyt'ing out ob de way."

"But you said, when you commenced the story, that there might be need of help before long. What did you mean by that?"

"I only meant dis, mas'r: I s'pected dat if Sir John should see Hecuba, an' know her, he might be for makin' us move away from dis yer place; an' den we should hab to find anodder home."

"Another home shall be found," said our hero.

"Berry well. When it's wanted I can let you know."

Roderic Glengyle paced across the room many times in anxious, painful thought; and finally, under the urgent necessity of the hour, he so far recovered his composure as to be able to determine his course. His duty would not allow him to stop there longer, and reflection only seemed to harrow his feelings. He caught the negro by the hand, and in a subdued whisper, said:

"Scipio, I will come again as soon as I can. As you value your own life, be careful of HER. If danger threatens, leave this place at once, and come to Newtown."

The old man promised that he would be faithful; and Roderic then hurried away. It was hard for him to leave without seeing that woman once more; but what could it avail him? What could he gain by seeing her? In short, what could he gain by seeing her ever again?

CHAPTER IX.

A PRISONER.

By one of those mighty efforts, which the strong-minded man can sometimes make, Roderic so far subdued the great emotions which moved within him that he met his companions without betraying any sign of the ordeal through which he had passed. Of course he did not converse very freely during the return; but Mark Adam supposed he was busy with plans for the capture of the Tories, so he did not wonder. When they reached Newtown, our hero went first to the dwelling of the old blacksmith. He did not mean to reveal anything of the strange discovery he had made; but he wished to make provision for the shelter of Hecuba and Scipio in case they should come that way. Moses Allen knew the poor maniac very well, and he promised that he would protect her if she came to him.

Maggie Burns was not in. Roderic inquired for her, and was informed that she had gone out to make a few calls.

A little while after this a messenger came from General Mercer. Roderic was wanted at that officer's quarters; and thither he went as quickly as possible. He found the General alone in his room, and the business was opened at once.

"My dear Captain," said Mercer, "I have just received word from the commander-in-chief, and there is need of much expedition in this business upon which you have entered. To-day is the twenty-second, and on the twenty-fifth every man must be in the camp. This order is positive; so, if your work is not done by that time, it must be left undone."

"Then," returned Roderic, "I understand it thus: I am to work as I can towards the discovery and capture of the Tory spies; but, at all events, I am to be here with my command on the twenty-fifth."

"Exactly. That will be Christmas,—you cannot miss it."

"I understand it, sir, and will govern myself accordingly."

"In the meantime," said Mercer, "you have liberty to call for as many men as you may want."

It was now late in the afternoon, and when Roderic left General Mercer, he set about making his preparations for the first night's work. He did not consider it policy to take his company with him at present, as it might prove too cumbersome a body to handle upon a mere expedition of inquiry. He selected the two officers, and two of the privates, being assured that these four would be sufficient to enable him to meet any emergency that could arise.

"You move as though you had your plan marked out, Captain," remarked the lieutenant, after they were ready to start.

"I know exactly where my first effort is to be made," replied our hero; "though I am not sure of success. However, there's nothing like trying."

The night was cold and overcast; and as soon as the last glimmer of day was gone, the party set forth. The course was towards Waldvale, and when they reached the corner of the park, exactly where they had stopped before, they stopped again for consultation.

"I think," said our hero, "that I will take Walter Slack with me. The rest of you will remain here till I come back."

This Walter Slack was a perfect Hercules in strength, and was as cool and brave as he was strong. In fact, he was said to be the strongest man in the army at that time.

"I have made this choice," explained Roderic, "because we may find work which Slack can do much better than any of the rest of us. I hope you are all satisfied."

Of course they were satisfied, especially Slack.

"When I come back," added the captain, "I may have work for all; but wait patiently, and do not leave this spot."

With this Roderick moved up towards the house, followed closely by his chosen companion. His first desire was to find Cato; and for this purpose he went round by the servants' quarters, where he could look in at the cook-room window; and there, sitting by the fire, he saw the very man he wanted; but the other servants were with him whom he had no desire to see. The question now was, how to get Cato out.

"I can call him out," said Slack. "They don't know me."

"Still," returned Roderic, "the appearance of a stranger might excite suspicion, especially if the fact were communicated to Sir John. That old negro I can trust; but I dare not trust the others."

"Then let us wait," suggested Slack "He may come out of his own accord; or the others may go away."

As fortune would have it, Cato arose almost as the Ranger spoke, and came towards them; and presently he opened the door of the porch, and looked out.

"*Cato!*"

"Ha!"

"*Cato!*"

"Hi!—Who dar?"

"It is a friend, Cato. It is I—Roderic. I want to speak with you. H—sh! don't make a noise, for I may be in danger."

This latter remark had the desired effect; for the negro had recognized his young master's voice, and the thought of danger to one whom he loved inspired him with resolution. He came out where the youth had esconced himself, and was soon taught to look upon the gigantic Ranger without fear.

"Cato, I think you love me."

"Bress yer soul, Mas'r Roderic, ye knows I does."

"And I think you would serve me."

"Ob course I would."

"Then listen to me. I want to get Saul Abbeford into my power."

"Does ye want to take him away from here?"

"Yes."

"Den, Mas'r Roderic, jes' say how dis chile ken help ye. By de big bar, I hate dat ar' Saul Abbeford. He's a bad man. He's ugly an' cross, an' makes hisself bigger 'n de biggest man 'bout here. He kicked me dis berry arternoon,' cause I was in his way when he come in wid his hoss."

"Ah,—where had he been with a horse?"

"I do' no, mas'r; but I s'pec's he'd been to tell somebody 'bout de awful work dat you cut up here las' night,—I s'pec's dat's it."

"I think it very likely. But, Cato, if you will just let me know when Saul Abbeford is alone in his room, and see that the coast is clear, I will take him out of your way without much trouble. I want him very much."

"S'pose 'n I go an' watch him, mas'r?"

"That's just what I want you to do."

"Yah—I see. Ho-ho! Ye want to cotch him all alone, wid a good chance to get at him."

"Exactly."

"By hokey, I ken do it. I'll keep my eye on him de minit I see him, an' come an' let ye know."

With this the negro went away, and Roderic then explained that this Saul Abbeford was John Glengyle's confidential servant.

"He's a coarse, overbearing fellow; with some intelligence, and some cunning; but his leading characteristics are, unmitigated cruelty to those below him; gross servility to those above him; and a total want of conscience and feeling. In fact, he is just the thing of which to make a ready tool for the man who can pay for his services. And yet he is an arrant coward. Such men always are. If we can get him safely within our power, I think we'll soon have all he knows."

"Let me get my hands on him—that's all?" muttered Slack; and as he spoke he clenched his fists till the joints fairly cracked.

"You shall have the chance," returned Roderic. "We may have to wait awhile; but we can afford to do that."

But they did not have to wait so long, after all. In less than half an hour Cato came back, and reported that Saul Abbeford had gone to his chamber.

"And," added the negro, "I reckon he's gwine to bed; for he's been off most all day, an' 'pears to be kind o' tired."

"It might be a good plan to take him in bed," said our hero. "Can't you find out, Cato, if he has turned in?"

Away went the negro again, and in a little while he came back with the intelligence that the man was abed.

"How," pursued Roderic, "get me a lantern as quickly as you can; and after we have gone up, do you hang by to see that the coast is clear."

The lantern was soon brought, and having shaded it with his coat, the young captain led the way into the house, the negro having seen that the doors were all unfastened. Roderic knew the way, and went on with sure step, until he finally reached Abbeford's room. Here he stopped and whispered to his companion:

"We must overpower, and gag and bind him with as little noise as possible."

"There'll be no trouble about that," returned Slack. "If he isn't stronger than an ordinary ox I'll handle him as I would a child. Just show him to me, sir."

They opened the door and went in, and, as the rays from the lantern fell upon the bed, Saul Abbeford raised his head and asked who was there. Walter Slack leaped forward and placed his hands upon the startled man—one hand upon his throat, and the other upon his mouth.

"If you move; or if you cry out, you are a dead man!" exclaimed the Ranger. But the warning was hardly needed, seeing that the poor wretch was already being choked out of his senses.

In a trice Slack had a thick bandage tied over his mouth—tied so tightly that he could hardly move his jaw—and then, as he would have lifted a pillow, he brought the fellow from the bed, and stood him upon the floor.

"Now on with your clothes. Don't stop.—Ha! move your hand to that bandage, and down you go! Come—on with your duds. Do as I tell you, and your life shall be spared."

At this point Roderic came forward.

"Saul Abbeford," he said, "you are going with us out into the woods. The night is cold, and you will be more comfortable with your clothes on; but you won't have much time to dress, so you had better improve the very few seconds we shall give you."

The man made a motion towards the bandage.

"You may have it off as soon as you are out of doors," said our hero.

"Say the word," interposed Slack, turning up his cuffs as though preparing for the work, "and I'll take him out as he is."

"He may have just one minute," answered Roderic.

Now Saul Abbeford knew enough of Roderic Glengyle to know that he was not to be trifled with; and, as he gazed upon the huge form of the Ranger, he evidently made up his mind that there was no trifling in that direction, either. At all events, he gave but one look more at his visitors, and then he pulled on his garments as quickly as possible.

"Now," said Slack, "we'll tie your hands behind you, so that they shan't be in your way. Don't be alarmed. I wont hurt you if you behave yourself." Suiting the action to the word, he brought the fellow's hands behind him, and there made them fast; after which he turned to his commander.

"Now, Capt'n, if you'll lead the way. I'll bring this chap along as quick as you please."

Roderic went ahead, and Slack followed with the prisoner, carrying him part of the way, as he would have carried a child, and a part of the way allowing him to walk. They reached the rear court without meeting with any obstruction, and here they stopped a moment. Our hero wished to see Cato; so he directed Slack to move on to the gate with his charge, and there wait for him. Then he turned back, and found the negro at the porch.

"Ye aint a gwine to kill dat ar' feller, be ye, mas'r?"

"No, not if he behaves himself; but let him go now; I want to speak with you upon another subject. You went last night to Mrs. Burns's cottage to see the people who are stopping there?"

"Yes."

"And you saw Hecuba?"

"No,—I didn't see her; but I seed ole Scipio."

"And you came back and told Sir John what you had learned?"

"Yes."

"Now mark me, Cato: I want you to answer me the best you can. I suppose you have wondered why Sir John should take an interest in these people?"

"Sartin, I hab."

"And you have heard him say something about them?"

"Yes."

"Then tell me this: From all that you have seen and heard, what should you think my uncle's views were concerning them? What does he think of them?"

"Well," replied Cato, after a little reflection, "I do' no what to say; but—I s'pec's dat mas'r t'inks dey is bad folks. He kind ob acts as ef he t'ot dey was thieves, or sumf'n ob dat sort."

"That is all you can make out, is it?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then tell me this: What should you think Sir John intended to do with them?"

"I'm sure I couldn't tell ye, mas'r Roderic. But—I guess he don't mean noff'n bad. P'raps he means to watch 'em, an' drive 'em off ef de cuts up any shines."

"That's all, is it?"

"I don't know ob anyt'ing more. I don't b'lieve he means to hurt 'em as long as they behave theirselves."

That was all our hero had to ask; and having cautioned the negro to keep silent touching what he had that night seen, he turned from the porch, and was soon with his companion, who had the prisoner safe in charge.

"Now," said Roderic, "we'll move along."

Abbeford tried to cry out, not to give any alarm, but to implore that the bandage might be taken from his mouth; for he was almost suffocated.

"In a little while," answered the youth, who understood the appeal. "Move quickly, and behave yourself; and you shall soon have breath enough." And with this he led the way down the park.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

MY PLAIN LOVER.

I was a coquette. Many a lover's heart I had lacerated by refusing their offers of marriage, after I had lured them on to a "declaration." My last victim's name was James Frazer. He was a tall, awkward, homely and ungainly man, but his heart was as true as steel. I respected him highly, and felt pained when I witnessed his anguish at my rejection of him. But the fact was, I had myself fallen in love with Elliott Tracy, a city gallant, who had been unremitted in his devotions to me. James Frazer warned me against Elliott, but I charged him with jealousy, and took his warnings as an insult. In a few days after Elliott and I were engaged, and my dream of romantic love seemed to be in a fair way of realization. I had a week of happiness. Many have not so much in a life-time. Many awake from the bright, short dream to find themselves in life-long darkness, and bondage from which there is no escape. Thank God, I was not to be so miserable as they!

There was an equestrian party winding through our grand old woods and quiet country roads. Elliott and I led the cavalcade. I rode my own beautiful Brown Bess. Elliott was mounted on the handsome black horse that had been sent him from the city. Following us was a bevy of merry girls and their cavaliers, and among them, tall, awkward, and silent, rode James Frazer. His presence had marred all the pleasure of my ride, and I was glad to be in advance of them all that I might not see him.

And so we rode on over the soft, sandy road that echoed not the tramp of our horses' hoofs, and I listened well pleased to the low but animated words of Elliott Tracy, who wished himself a knight, and me a fair ladye of the olden time, that he might go forth to do battle for me, and compel all men to recognize the claims of his peerless love. Very eloquently he spoke the inspiration of love, of the brave deeds and perilous exploits it had prompted, wishing again and again that he might thus proclaim and maintain his love before the world. It pleased me to listen to this, and to believe it sincere, though I surely had no wish to put my lover to such a test.

A shot rang through the still woods, and a wounded bird, darting past, fluttered and fell at the feet of Brown Bess. With a bound and a spring, that nearly unseated me, she was off.

Struggling to regain my seat, I had no power to restrain her, and even as she flew the fear and madness of the moment grew upon her. I could only cling breathlessly to mane and bridle and wonder helplessly where this mad gallop was to end. She swerved from a passing wagon, and turned into a cart track, that led to the river. In the sudden movement the reins had been torn from my hands, and I could not regain them. I clung to the mane, and closed my eyes that I might not behold the fate that awaited me. How sweet was life in those precious moments that I thought my last. How all its joys, its affections, its last crowning love rose up before me! I thought of the pang that would rend Elliott's heart as he saw me lying, mangled and dead, and then the thought would come if he were pursuing and trying to save me, even, as he had said, at the risk of life and limb.

I remembered no more. I felt a sudden shock, a fearful rushing through the air, and knew no more until, days afterward, I woke to a faint, weak semblance of life, in my room at home.

I never saw Elliott Tracy again. The last words I ever heard from his lips were those of knightly daring. The last act of his life, in connection with mine, was to follow in the train of frightened youths who rode after me, to contemplate the disaster from afar, and as soon as he saw me lifted from the shallow bed of the river into which I had been thrown when my frightened horse stopped suddenly on its bank, to ride hastily back to the village. That evening he sent to make inquiries, and learning that I was severely but it was hoped not fatally injured, he thenceforth contented himself with such tidings of my condition and improvement as could be gained from village rumor.

At last it was known that I would never recover entirely from the effects of my injury, and that very day Elliott Tracy departed suddenly from the village. He made no attempt to see me, nor sent me any farewell. When I was once more abroad, and beginning, though with much unallayed bitterness, to learn the lesson of patience and resignation that awaited me, I received a letter from him, in which he merely said that he presumed my own judgment had taught me that, in my altered circumstances, our engagement must be at an end, but to satisfy his own sense of honor (*his honor!*) he wrote to say that, while entertaining the highest respect for me, he desired a formal renunciation of my claim.

Writing at the bottom of this letter, "Let it be as you wish," I returned it to him at once, and thus ended my brief dream of a romantic love.

I had heard ere this of Elliott Tracy's cowardly conduct on that day, and now I first bethought me to inquire who had rescued me from imminent death.

And then I learned that James Frazer, his arm already broken by the jerk with which Brown Bess tore away from him as he caught at her bridle, had ridden after me, and been the first to lift me from the water. Many times daily he had made inquiries for me. His had been the hand that sent the rare flowers that decked my room. His were the books I read in the lingering days of convalescence, and his, now, was the arm that supported me as, slowly and painfully, I paced the garden walks.

I have been his wife for many a year. I have forgotten that he is not handsome, or rather he is beautiful to me, because I see his grand and lovely spirit shining through his plain features, and animating his awkward figure. I have long since laid aside, as utterly untenable, my pet theory, that beautiful spirits dwell only in lovely bodies. It may be a provendential compensation that, in denying physical perfection, the soul is not dwarfed or distorted, but shines the brighter that it is not marred by petty vanity or love of the world's praise.

MY MOTHER'S MEMORY.

BY FINLEY JOHNSON.

My mother died ere I could scarce
Breathe her beloved name,
And o'er my childhood's sunny path
Dark clouds of sorrows came;
My bark of life was wrecked upon
Misfortune's hidden reef,
And ere bright manhood on me dawned,
I had wept tears of grief;
And now I seek my mother's grave,
That not one soul may see
How dark the shadows are that throw
Their sombre hues o'er me.

The birds are in the merry glen,
The summer flowers bloom;
But I their beauties leave, to sit
Beside my mother's tomb;
And there I watch, in solemn thought,
Some bright star in the sky,
And think within its depths I see
My mother's gentle eye;
And happy dreams within me rise,
My sorrowing heart to cheer;
I think—although to me unseen,
Her loving spirit's near.

I mix among my fellow-men,
Within the marts of trade;
But, oh, my mind is far away
Beneath the willow's shade;
And though the world has many charms,
Which other hearts may see,
Yet, oh, the brightest of them all
Possess no joys for me;
For oft my mother's gentle form
In memory's waves I view,
And then I pray that I, like her,
May be an angel, too.

THE BETTER WAY.

A STORY FOR MOTHERS.

BY T. S. ARTHUR.

The last fretful child was in bed, and a hushed quiet reigned through the house. With feet that stirred no echoes in silent air, Mrs. Lawrence glided from the chambers, and returned to the breakfast-room, where her husband sat reading. He did not look up from the page on which his eyes were bent, nor seem to observe her entrance.

There was a weight on the heart of Mrs. Lawrence as she sat down by her work-table under the gas-light, and took a small basket in her lap—a weight, and also a sense of relief. Her active, restless, noisy, and too often turbulent and contentious brood were asleep and safe from outward harms; for this a sentiment of thankfulness lay unspoken on her lips. But with the stillness that succeeded came troubled memories, self-reproaches, questions as to the right and wrong of her own life among her children, doubts, fears, anxieties.

Not in sweet peace, like the passage of a summer day, had closed the twilight hours in Mrs. Lawrence's home on the evening of her introduction to the reader. They had fallen in the rain of passion. Tired, fretted, and ill-natured, the children met a like state in their mother; and angry authority chafed against blind wilfulness. So the day had closed in storm; and now, in the brooding hush that followed, Mrs. Lawrence sat down with the pressure of misgiving on her heart:

"What *am* I to do with these children?"

The words leaped out suddenly, giving Mr. Lawrence a start. He did not, however, let his eyes fall away from the page he was reading, nor, beyond a slight change of position, intimate a consciousness that his wife had spoken. When the full heart breaks silence, it does not usually rest in a single utterance. Mrs. Lawrence went on after a brief pause:

"I am out of all heart with Johnny!"

Mr. Lawrence let his book fall, and his eyes rest upon the shadowed countenance of his wife.

"And Lydia is such a trial! So fretful and irritable. Johnny keeps her in trouble all day long. You don't know what a time I have with them."

Still Mr. Lawrence did not answer. Not that he was indifferent; not that his thought was on his book, or away from the present. His thought was with his wife and children, and on his mind lay a pressure of concern. But what was it best for him to say? That question perplexed and kept him silent. He did not wish to blame his wife, and hesitated on even an intimation that the fault might lie at her door. She was very sensitive, and could not bear to have him say a word that involved disapproval.

"What am I to do?" Mrs. Lawrence looked steadily at her husband, and paused as though expecting him to answer. "You saw how it was a little while ago."

"Yes."

Something in the voice of her husband, as he uttered this single word, chafed on the feelings of Mrs. Lawrence. She was not ignorant of the fact that she had lost temper, and dealt rather harshly with Johnny before sending him to bed, and that something in the voice of her husband sounded like accusation or rebuke.

"What am I to do?" she repeated the question with just a touch of asperity in her tones.

"There are two requisites of good government," said Mr. Lawrence, raising the book to his eyes, and affecting to read—"self government, and a wise administration. Without the former, the latter is impossible."

He let the book fall into his lap, and looked calmly at his wife. The quick blood was already mounting to her face. She understood him thoroughly.

"I wish you had the trial of them for a week or two!" Mrs. Lawrence spoke with considerable sharpness.

"I am not desirous of changing places, Ruth," answered the husband in a calm, soothing voice. "The difficulty of your's I fully understand; and I know that you are filling it far better than I could. Patience, forbearance, and self-control are above all things needed; and these are not my special virtues."

"I do the best I can," said Mrs. Lawrence, her tones softening a little, but expressing more discouragement.

"Are you certain about that?"

The blood, which had commenced receding from the face of Mrs. Lawrence, went flushing back again, mounting to the very temples.

"Yes, I am certain!" She spoke emphatically, and then shut her lips with a close pressure.

"If we were all doing the best in our power, Ruth, our lives would be far nearer perfection than they are. Heaven knows, my shortcomings are a continual reproach. So, take that back, my dear, and think it over a little."

There was something so impassioned, and so kind in her husband's manner, that the excitement in Mrs. Lawrence's mind began to die away; and thought grew clearer in consequence.

"I might do better, I suppose," was her answer, in a falling tone: "but no one is perfect."

"Of course not. If we were perfect, there would be no occasion for trial and discipline. But, one thing is certain, we might all come a great deal nearer to perfection than we are in the habit of doing. Isn't that so?"

"Yes." The admission came half reluctantly.

"It is so in my case," said Mr. Lawrence. "Not a day closes, in which I do not look back and sigh over short comings. The great source of all our troubles in life, Ruth, lies within ourselves. I see this more clearly every day. If I could always be right with myself—if I could always possess my soul in calmness—I could deal with events as they touched me, and rarely experience a jar. It is from an undue re-action against the circumstances of life that I experience so many disturbances. And as it is with me, so it is with you and others. This getting right with ourselves is the great achievement."

Mrs. Lawrence dropped her eyes away from her husband's face, and sat silent for some time.

"Without self-government," said Mr. Lawrence, seeing that his wife did not reply, and wishing to turn her thought exactly into the true channel, "it is impossible rightly to govern others. We must be calm ourselves, if we wish to produce calmness in other minds; patient, if we would produce patience; just and discriminating, if we would produce like conditions. It is the disturbance we ourselves feel that so often creates disturbance in those we seek to influence. Now, let your thoughts go down into your own consciousness, Ruth, and see how it has been with you in this and other days of more than ordinary trial with our restless, impulsive, hard to govern children. From some cause your nerves were unstrung, and you were not able to possess your soul in patience. In almost your first contact with the children, there came a jar, and after that everything went wrong."

Mr. Lawrence ceased speaking, and an expression of pain went over his countenance, for suddenly his wife dropped her face into her hands and commenced sobbing. The truth he wished her to see had gone home. From any other lips she could have taken the admonition calmly, but nothing gave her such deep grief as the knowledge that her husband saw in her any fault. She was not angry, but hurt and humiliated. It was plain, from his language, that he thought her government in the household exceedingly defective—so at least it seemed to her—and the impression that this judgment was correct went profoundly into her own convictions. And, in truth, her dealings with her little family were not in all things wisely ordered. Just the thing most needed her husband had suggested—self-government. But she could not receive the suggestion without pain, at least not from him.

Only a few moments did Mrs. Lawrence sit sobbing; then she arose, and passing from the room, went to the chamber where her children were asleep, and throwing herself, in half abandonment of feeling, across a bed, let the tears flow at will. Ah, that was indeed an hour of bitterness! But the lesson had gone home.

Mr. Lawrence sighed as his wife left the room, and then turned to his book, but he knew as little of its contents an hour afterwards as then.

On the next morning, with a prayer on her lips for strength and patience, Mrs. Lawrence left the pillow where sleep had been sweet for at least a portion of the night. Already the voices of her waking children admonished her that duty must begin. Through many wakeful hours had she reviewed the past, admitting its errors, and resolving to do differently in the time to come, and now the time was at hand. An angry cry from one of the children sent a shiver along her nerves, and gave her heart a quick throb. She understood its meaning. Johnny, her oldest boy, had wilfully annoyed his sister. Usually, on such occasions, which were of daily, and sometimes of almost hourly occurrence, the mother would come down like a storm on the offender, and she felt impelled to do so now. But, conscious of her own disturbed state, and aware that, if she gave way to her feelings, all self-control was gone, she stood still for a little while, to collect her thoughts, and then went, with slow steps and a repressed manner, into the room occupied by the children.

"What is the trouble here?" she asked, but in a voice so strange to them under the circumstances that they all grew silent, and looked at her in mute inquiry.

"What is it, Johnny?" There was no threat of punishment, no anger, no excitement in the mother's tones, but a tender concern, that was almost sad.

"There it is," said the boy, drawing his hand from behind him, and reaching a doll's head to Lydia. He had just snatched it from her. "I was only in fun."

"Do you think that the right kind of fun, Johnny?" asked Mrs. Lawrence, in a calm, serious voice. Then she added: "Come, Lydia; I want you to dress quickly this morning. You're almost always late in getting ready."

There was something so unusual in the way their mother spoke to them, that the children moved to the work of dressing themselves with an alacrity and good temper that surprised Mrs. Lawrence. In lacing one of his shoes, Johnny broke the tie, when a word of impatience fell from his lips. On the very last occasion of a similar accident, the snap of the tie had been responded to by Mrs. Lawrence in the sentence, angrily spoken, "There it is again, you careless boy! I believe you break your shoe strings on purpose!" Of course, such a speech did not in any way improve Johnny's temper. Now, with the impatient word, his eyes went up to the face of his mother, half fearfully, half deprecatingly. He had felt the pleasant warmth of her sunnier mood, and did not wish it changed. It was grateful to his young heart. The old impulse stirred the mother's feelings at sound of the breaking cord; but she was in the better way, and not easily to be pushed aside. It was surely worth an effort to keep her feet therein. So, forcing back the wave of passion, she said, kindly:

"Is it broken so badly that we must throw it away?" And stooping to examine the cord, she answered her own question, in a cheerful way: "O, no. A knot here will make it all right. Shall I tie it for you?"

"O, no, mother, I can do it myself," replied Johnny, in a bright, brave voice, and he bent over the shoe with the earnestness of a right purpose.

"Don't pull quite so hard, dear," said Mrs. Lawrence, as she saw Johnny begin the work of lacing his boot again after the tie was mended.

"No, ma'am, I'll take care."

How quickly kind, thoughtful dealing with this impulsive, self-willed child had wrought a change in his temper; and his mother, in seeing the effect, saw the cause also—and she felt both encouragement and rebuke. What had wrought this almost magical change? It was self-discipline! She perceived and acknowledged the truth. Getting power over herself was the first and greatest difficulty. That attained, and all beyond was comparatively easy.

At the breakfast table, Mrs. Lawrence noticed that the children appeared to regard her with a half curious interest. Johnny took his place quietly, instead of in the noisy, dashing way peculiar to that young gentleman; and Lydia, freed from his annoyances, forgot herself so far as to give sisterly attention to a little brother who occupied a high seat by her side.

But an incident occurred that came near destroying the harmonious balance of things thus far maintained—a common incident, and one with which few mothers exercise patience. A cup of milk and water was overturned, and the contents left upon the table cloth. It was Johnny's work, and carelessly done.

"You!" Only that one word escaped the lips of Mrs. Lawrence; but the flash in her eyes, and the color on her face, betrayed the irritation that was near overmastering her. Instead of smarting reproof, however, there came a kind remonstrance, and the startled boy looked grieved and grateful at the same moment.

"I didn't mean to do it, mother. It was an accident," he said, with a troubled air, instead of the defiant or indifferent one usual on these occasions. "And I'm sorry."

A grave quiet followed this incident, for all felt how narrowly they had escaped a scene of passionate disturbance, which, contrasted with the harmony that prevailed, made them shrink from its bare imagination. Peace, order, and a spirit of mutual kindness were felt to be so sweet, that the danger of losing them gave an impression of pain. By none were the means of escape more vividly realized than by Mrs. Lawrence. She saw that on her successful effort at controlling an impatient spirit, everything was due. Had the stormy words, which leaped to her tongue, found an utterance, how would all have changed in a moment! She was not so cheerful during the rest of this meal; but her subdued gentleness of manner, and thoughtful attention to the wants of every child, more than made up for the sunnier countenance, and as effectually repressed disorder and unkindness.

When had a meal passed, before this one, free from strife among the children, or angry reproof from the mother? The occasion was memorable.

"How well the children behaved this morning," said Mr. Lawrence, as he stood drawing on his overcoat, preparatory to going out. There was a tone of pleasure in his voice; and something beyond this, also, not to be concealed—approval of his wife, and encouragement to persevere. He would not have ventured in words all that he wished look and voice to convey.

"Better than usual," she simply replied. Then, after a pause, added: "If it would only last."

"And why not?" Mr. Lawrence ventured to say.

"Children are very uncertain. Their moods change like the changing wind, or like the skies of April,"

"Be a sun in their April sky, dear," said Mr. Lawrence, kissing his wife tenderly, and then, not waiting to see the effect of his words, turned off and left for the day's business.

Mrs. Lawrence stepped into the parlor alone, and sat down with tears in her eyes. Very clearly opened her duty before her. She saw the way in which she should walk; but had she strength to keep her feet therein? Self-conquest first! Yes, that was the requirement now. How easy had been the control of the children thus far, after self-control was gained. How clearly she had seen what was best to be said and done, and what a power had dwelt in mildly spoken sentences. Obedience had seemed spontaneous. Act followed word as by enchantment. Ere yet her thoughts ran clear, came a new occasion for prompt work. Left only a few minutes to themselves, the natural tendencies of the children had borne them away into strife. Johnny, the master of discord among them, forgetful of the pleasant breakfast season, was at his old tricks again; and the sign thereof was a passionate scream, followed by loud accusations from Lydia.

Mrs. Lawrence sprung to her feet, under the usual angry impulse felt on these occasions, and, with the will to punish in her heart, strode across the room, and was in the hall before thought and memory arrested her steps.

"No—no—no! This is not the way!" And, as she said this, she drew both hands tightly against her breast and stood still for some moments, the strife between the children yet going on. Then, with a deliberate movement, she went up stairs to the nursery, where the children had gone after leaving the breakfast-room. Her usual way of coming upon them when they were in trouble among themselves, was with a loud, imperious demand, and a hurried execution of punishment on the one that appeared, at the first glance, most in fault. Nearly always a certain degree of injustice was involved in these punishments, and their effects were, in consequence, evil instead of good. Of this she was often painfully conscious.

So quietly did Mrs. Lawrence now enter the nursery, that the children were not aware of her presence until she was half across the room. Suddenly the strife ceased, and Johnny and Lydia, who were in angry contention, hushed their discord and stood with a rebuked shame-facedness before their mother, in marked contrast with their usual air of dogged defiance or shrinking fear on these unhappily too frequent occasions.

"This is very sad, my children," said Mrs. Lawrence, with grief instead of anger in her voice. And then sitting down among them, with calmness and patience, went to the real cause of trouble, and succeeded in gaining what she had never gained before, a mutual penitent acknowledgement of wrong, and a promise to be kinder and more forbearing one towards another.

It would require many pages to give all the incidents, trials, self-discipline and self-conquests on that day; and they would be found deeply interesting to every true mother. By the strength of genuine love for her children, into which flowed a heavenly power, Mrs. Lawrence kept the balance of her mind; and when the evening shadows fell again, and her husband came home, there was sweet tranquility, order love and peace in their dwelling.

"How pleasant the children are with one another," said Mr. Lawrence, in a low voice, leaning toward his wife, as she sat sewing, after tea, and glancing at Johnny and Lydia, who were reading together from the pages of the same book.

"Yes." She answered no further, but, after looking towards the children a few moments, with a calm, almost serious, yet not troubled face, let her eyes fall again upon her sewing. But the eyes of thought were looking away down into her own soul, and conning the lessons of that day's experience written in strong characters.

"You must have discovered a new method of government," said Mr. Lawrence.

The eyes of his wife were again lifted to his face.

"I have," was her simple answer.

"Indeed! Well, it seems working to a charm. Does it involve any secret?"

"No." Her eyes, in which light and feeling began to play, were still upon his face.

"On what is it founded?"

"On Self-government." Her eyes lingered in those of her husband for a moment, and then fell down upon her work—lingered just long enough for him to see tears beginning to suffuse them.

Nothing more was said. They understood each other. But the lesson of that day was the lesson of all succeeding days for Mrs. Lawrence. Many years have passed since then; and all who know her family consider it the best ordered, and her children the best disciplined, of any within their circle. She had learned the better way, and, learning, walked therein.

* * *

Absorbed in Business.—Some men devote themselves so exclusively to their business as almost entirely to neglect their domestic and social relations. A gentleman of this class having failed, was asked what he intended to do. "I am going home to get acquainted with my wife and children," said he.

JOHN ETHERIDGE, THE MISER.

BY MARY C. VAUGHAN.

The shattered old brown house stood all alone upon the wide common—a slightly elevated, rolling piece of ground. No trees grew upon it. It was full of deserted stone-pits or quarries. Huge boulders were scattered over its extent, and shelving rocks cropped out at irregular intervals. It was as barren and desolate a scene as could well be conceived; but in its midst John Etheridge had lived alone for more than thirty years, burrowing like a beast and subsisting upon the contributions of charity.

Yet thirty years before John Etheridge, a gay young bachelor, dwelt in the grand old mansion (now deserted) on the other side of the town, master of the old place and its wide domain. His laborers gathered smiling harvests from his broad fields; his fishermen the finny produce of the river; while the wide common yielded from its sterile bosom huge blocks of granite, that myriads of stout armed men delved in ceaseless toil to raise. Then the old brown house was the home of the overseer of the quarries. No descendant of the Etheridges had ever dwelt in so poor a place.

Yet the end came! Scarce fire years of profusion, of reckless extravagance, sufficed to bring embarrassment. The young man refused to examine the proofs of his coming ruin, much less to adopt the means his faithful steward recommended. His house was full of guests. His betrothed wife and her parents had honored him by their presence. Already the preparations for his marriage had been commenced on a large scale. Already the refitting of the old house had been ordered so soon as the autumn should clear it of its occupants. Already carriage-makers were at work on the splendid equipages he had bespoken. Already the bridal trousseau was in a state of forwardness, and fashionables begged the privilege of visiting the celebrated modiste who had it in hand, while newspapers printed mysterious little paragraphs concerning it. That was a strange time, indeed, as John Etheridge said to his steward, to retrench. The good man was surely mistaken. There were the fisheries and the quarries.

But the fisheries had been almost totally destroyed by the erection of factories on the river below, and the quarries were almost exhausted—by the overseer's showing, the profits would scarcely exceed the expenses this year.

John Etheridge whistled and turned away. His brow clouded for a moment, then he laughed, half-merrily, half-scornfully, and sauntered away to the stables.

A few moments later he was speeding toward the county town. There he visited the principal jeweller, and received from his hands the splendid diamond brooch which had been ordered, through him, from town, giving in return a check for an almost fabulous amount. That night the brooch blazed upon the bosom of the bride-elect at the grand ball which filled the old manor-house with gay revellers. The steward said, afterwards, that the price of the brooch and the cost of the ball might have saved the last of the Etheridges from ruin. But he tempted his fate and it overwhelmed him.

They were to have been married at Christmas, John Etheridge and Blanche Bernard, but ere that day came the stroke had fallen. When the sun rose over the gray silence of that winter morning, John Etheridge, homeless and utterly forsaken, sat alone in the poor room of the village tavern, which had been his refuge when the officers of the law took possession of his house and estate. His friends had utterly shrunk away from him. Not one of all the crowd who had enjoyed his splendid hospitalities was found to stand manfully by his side in the hour of trial and abasement. John Etheridge had been arrogant in his prosperity, hence had attracted only sycophants, not real friends. So he bowed his head on his hands on that winter morning that should have witnessed his bridals, and sorrowfully reflected that he was indeed alone.

But where was the beautiful woman who had promised to be his wife? Surely she had placed herself by his side, had taken the wife's place in that hour of suffering!

Ah, no! Blanche was worldly. Her hand had been bought, her heart had never gone with it. Her parents had flattered the rich man, they shrank from the poor man as if there were contamination in his very presence, in the air he breathed. They had sailed away to Europe, carrying with them their daughter, and all the splendid gifts which Etheridge had lavished on his promised bride.

Alone, poor, homeless, the spendthrift heir sat in his tavern room that morning, while the Christmas bells rang out their merry chimes, and revolved his gloomy thoughts, that could not, dared not pierce the future.

After this day he was not seen in his native place for many months. And when he, at last, returned, it was to take up his abode in the old house upon the common, and to enter upon the mode of life we have described. And thus, without a change, he lived for many years.

It was known that some small wreck had been saved from his fortune. How this had been disposed of none knew with any certainty. But it was supposed that its accumulations could not have failed to reach a large amount in the course of the years in which he had subsisted on charity.

There were two topics of wondering comment in the village one summer day. One was that the old man had not been seen for several days in the village streets—the other that a handsome carriage, containing two ladies, had been driven through them, and had stopped at the old brown house on the common. The ladies were even then with the old man, who lay dying on the pallet of rags that had long served him for a bed. They returned at night to the village hotel, and registered their names as Mrs. Langdon and Miss Langdon.

There were none to recognize, in the still beautiful woman in widow's weeds, the once lonely Blanche Bernard, and her daughter was a stranger in her own country.

Blanche was not less worldly than of old. She had obeyed the old man's summons, because it conveyed an intimation that it would be for her interest to do so, and she was proud and very poor. And she had brought her child at the same bidding, and had turned scornfully away at the sight of the tears that rolled down the girl's cheeks in that dim old room, and in the presence of suffering and approaching death. She had no pity for the man she had helped to wreck and ruin. If he had aught to bestow upon her, she could condescend to stand in his presence—that was all.

But for pitying, gentle Lucy, the old man would have died alone at last. But ere the change came her care had surrounded him with many comforts. His couch was made soft, and some of the old luxuries of that long buried life were brought around him. He died in her arms, naming her Blanche with his dying breath, and evidently confounding her with the woman he had loved through life, despite the wrongs she had inflicted upon him. And when he was gone they found that the gigantic accumulations of those years of sordid living had all been bequeathed to Lucy. So it came to pass that Blanche Bernard became mistress of Etheridge Manor House, for during the minority of her daughter she reigned there supreme.

WIT AND WISDOM.

ORIGINAL AND SELECTED—PREPARED EXPRESSLY FOR THE LEDGER
BY GEO. D. PRENTICE.

The best and bravest of the men of genius are in advance not only of their own age but of every age. As the German prose-poet says, every possible future is behind them. We cannot suppose a period of time when the world will have come up abreast with them.

At midnight the blue sky bends over us, dewy and soft, and radiant with innumerable stars, like the inverted bell of some great blue flower, sprinkled with golden dust and breathing fragrance.

The great master of even a single instrument of music is indeed a wizard. He chains us in the slavery of delight, and is the only despot that rules over willing captives.

Half of time is day; and half is night; but more than half our conscious being is made up of dreams—and the dreams of the day outnumber those of the night.

Children make men better citizens. When your own child has learned in the streets to swear, it makes you feel that you are a stock-holder in the public morality.

Go to your friend's house for a favor, and Hope will open the door, but Disappointment will probably shut it.

Men of some vocations are usually undersized. The most strapping fellows in the community are the schoolmasters.

Man, the noblest of all animals, is born lowest. The next thing below a babe is nothing, and the next thing above a man is an angel.

Show a haughty man that you do not look up to him, and he will not feel that he can look down upon you.

Heaven puts the excess of hope in one man in order that it may be a medicine to the man who is despondent.

What would the nightingale care if the toad despised his singing? He would sing on, leaving the cold toad to his dank shadows.

There is no day born but comes like a stroke of music into the world and sings itself all the way through.

Some men are drones in the money-cells of to-day, who fill the honey-cells of to-morrow and a thousand morrows.

Little more need be said of the practice of writing comments on the margin of books than—comments are needless.

You may gather a rich harvest of knowledge by reading, but thought is the winnowing machine.

Keep the horrors at arm's length. Never turn a blessing round to see whether it has a dark side to it.

A promising young man may do very well perhaps—a paying one much better.

Beware how you have dealings with a man taller than yourself; he can always overreach you.

Most books in these days are like some kinds of trees—a great many leaves and no fruit.

Women should set good examples, for the men are always following after the women.

The people never can be jealous, for jealousy is not a *popular* passion.

It seems a hard case that, when a man dies, his better *half* is entitled to only a *third*.

A man is most likely to fall down upon the ice when he ventures upon it *slip*-shod.

If you are conscious of being green, and don't want folks to see it, try to be an invisible green.

Camels, angry cats, and cross wives always have their backs up.

Many a man is blackballed by those who are hardly fit to perform that operation upon his boots.

"Doctor, if you cut off my leg awkwardly, I shall as long as I live be as mad as a *hopper*."

Cheerfulness is the ever-singing cricket of the soul's hearth-stone.

A man, by making a bad husband, oftentimes makes a bad wife.

The deepest sorrow is noiseless. There is no grief like the grief which does not speak.

CURRENT ITEMS.

A short time since a man named Kolman, at work in a foundry in Buffalo, took a ladle of melted iron from the furnace, set it upon the ground to cool, and throwing a piece of wet metal into it to test it, the boiling iron immediately flashed upward into his face, scalding him terribly, and destroying the sight of both of his eyes.

A man named Wilson, who lived in Hempstead, L. I., having recently discharged a number of laborers, was set upon by them and beaten savagely, and one of them, hitting him on the head with a stone, inflicted a mortal injury. Three of the ruffians were arrested, but the one who gave the fatal blow escaped.

A man named Bright, his wife and six children, were murdered by a family servant at Rogersville, Tenn., a short time since. The murderer attempted to escape, but was pursued and captured by the infuriated people, who at last accounts were making preparations to roast him alive.

Two men recently entered a house in Water street, and getting into a quarrel with the inmates, bottles, decanters and tumblers were sent flying promiscuously among the crowd, and the keeper of the place stabbed one of the men four times, and gave the other a dangerous wound in the back.

A couple of boys residing in Degraw street, Brooklyn, while out boating in Buttermilk Channel, were thrown into the water by the capsizing of the boat, and would have perished had not a man named Steuben hastened to their assistance, and rescued them from drowning.

A burglar, "caught in the act," in a house in Fourth Avenue, on being arraigned before a justice, endeavored to excuse his criminal conduct by pleading that he was intoxicated at the time, but his plea was overruled, and he was locked up.

A man at work in a steam-mill, at Vicksburgh, Miss., entered one of the boilers to clean it, and the engineer, not being aware of the fact, let in the steam from the other boiler, and literally boiled the unfortunate man to death.

A man named Murray got into a row with a number of Germans in the Bowery, one evening recently, when one of the latter drew a sword that he happened to have on, and cut Murray so severely in the neck as to endanger his life.

During the late passage of the steamship Great Eastern to New York, a seaman became entangled in the rigging, and the mizzen gaff falling upon him, broke one of his legs and fractured his skull, from the effects of which he died after the steamer reached this port.

A short time since, as two boys, living in Adelphi street, Brooklyn, were playing together, one of them became angry, and kicked the other so violently in the stomach as to occasion his death.

A man named Blane, living in Cleveland, Ohio, while intoxicated recently, cut out his wife's tongue, then broke her jaw, and otherwise maltreated her to such an extent that her life was despaired off.

A young boy, while assisting his father in a saw-mill, at Enfield, Mass., a short time since, fell, and striking his neck across the saw, his head was instantly severed from his body.

A man living in Fifty-third street recently got into a quarrel with his wife, and threw her over the railing of a stoop to the pavement below, causing frightful and dangerous injuries.

An Eighth Avenue car was recently run into by a steam fire engine, which smashed the rear of the car, and seriously injured the conductor and two passengers.

A young man was recently killed in the New York and Erie Railroad depot, in Jersey City, by being run over by a locomotive as he was attempting to cross the track.

It is stated that several mad dogs have recently been killed in Hoboken and vicinity, by which several persons had been bitten.

A riot recently occurred at St. Johns, Newfoundland, during which the troops fired upon the mob, killing two persons and wounding four others.

Two men who were excavating a sewer in Jay street, Brooklyn, were killed a short time since by the falling in of the earth, which completely buried them.

THE NEW YORK LEDGER

ROBERT BONNER, Editor and Proprietor.

NEW YORK, SATURDAY, JUNE 15, 1861.

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PERSONAL.

The New York correspondent of the *Springfield Gazette* writes as follows:

"There is a great deal of rivalry existing here between Commodore Vanderbilt, the steamship man, and Mr. Bonner, the Ledger man, as to who shall own the fastest pair of horses. They are both successful men—Vanderbilt has always taken the lead in the steamship business, and as everybody knows the Ledger has never been equalled in circulation by any paper in this country; but from what I hear, they are both very likely to be out-generalled by a number of horse-sharpers, who expect to make something out of them. These sharpers, aided by two or three outsiders, who are envious of both the great teams, have been trying to induce Bonner and Vanderbilt to match their horses; but Bonner, although his horses have made the fastest time together, will not match. He is opposed to racing, and, I understand, says he would rather shoot his horses than allow them to engage in a race. Still other people say that he is so sure of beating Vanderbilt that he may make an exception, and let his horses trot once—the proceeds to go to some charitable purpose."

All we have to say concerning the above is simply this: Let the temptation come in whatever form it may, no horse belonging to us will ever be allowed to trot in a race of any kind, for charitable or any other purposes; consequently there is no danger of our being "out-generalled" by anybody in that respect; and we think that the distinguished career of our esteemed friend, Commodore Vanderbilt, is a sufficient guarantee that no one will be able to "use" him to carry out their schemes. We have, it is true, a good pair of horses; but we keep them for our own private driving; and if they ever start in a race, we will agree—notwithstanding they are the most valuable pair in the country—to make a present of them to the first man who asks for them. We hope this statement will satisfy all parties interested in the matter, and induce a few busy-bodies to mind their own business.

THE TRUTH PURE AND SIMPLE.

An authoress of some celebrity, who has favored the world with her "Thoughts about Women," mentions as a lamentable circumstance, that "whether from a superabundance of the imaginative faculty, carelessness of phrase, or a readiness to jump at conclusions, and represent facts not as they are, but as they appear to the representers, very few women are absolutely and invariably veracious." This mildly expressed opinion of a lady concerning one of the alleged weaknesses of her sex, may or may not be too broad and sweeping, but even if entirely correct, it places the fibs of women in advantageous contrast with the more direct and deliberate disingenuousness to which a large majority of *man*kind is more or less addicted. Thousands of business men garble facts and make false statements every day, considering such deviations from truth not only quite venial, but a necessary part of their duty to themselves and their families. Surely such mercenary mendacity is much less excusable than the unpremeditated exaggerations of a gossipping woman. Men frequently lie thoughtfully, systematically, *on principle*, if we may use the term, but women, in most cases, involuntarily. They cherish a stronger love of truth in their hearts than men do, yet they have a way of tinting, twisting, and stretching the truth, as their tastes, partialities, and temperaments dictate, which sometimes leads to very mischievous consequences.

This habit of *misshaping facts* is the most dangerous characteristic of "gossip." If people would say nothing but the incontrovertible truth about the follies or vices of their friends and acquaintances, or be wholly silent on such matters, which is the wiser and better course, how many bitter quarrels would be avoided, how many hearts that are now sore with undeserved sorrow, would be blithe and happy. But three-fourths of what we call highly respectable people do not, as a rule, speak the truth pure and simple. Their statements are colored by what they hope or believe—by their prejudices, their expectations, their interests.

False impressions may be conveyed by *omissions* as well as amplifications. Yarn-spinners who tell the truth without telling the whole truth, are just as likely to set society by the ears as your magniloquent gossips who expand and "dress up" a simple and veracious story.

For example, Mrs. Curt, in a confidential morning gossip with her friend, Mrs. Blurt, informs her that their mutual friend, Dr. Wirt, has advised her not to let her children play with the little Blurts. The doctor's remark was not merely harmless but commendable, inasmuch as the junior members of the house of Blurt were going through a course of whooping cough. But Mrs. Curt makes no mention of the motive of the worthy doctor in volunteering his advice. Mrs. B., having heard that her children were considered rude by the neighbors, chooses to put an offensive moral construction on the good man's observation. The result is a "difficulty" between the Blurts and the Wirts, in which the Curts, and perhaps a dozen other families with whom the parties are intimate, are involved. A criminative and recriminative war of tongues and pens ensues. Then come explanations, apologies, regrets, &c., and the belligerents, quieted but not satisfied, shake hands, and pronounce the "ridiculous affair" at end, each individual implicated retaining, however, his or her original opinion on the points at issue. Truth, *with a reservation*, may in this way, and in many other ways, do an infinite amount of harm. Out of such little episodes in social history grow family feuds, unworthy suspicions, malice, hatred and all uncharitableness.

Without subscribing to the better maxim, "Believe only half what you see, and nothing that you hear," we hold it to be only common prudence to look at all sides of a question before expressing a definitive opinion upon it, and to test thoroughly the truth of all gossip before believing or repeating it. The better plan, however, is to let it go in at one ear, and out at the other, and never repeat it at all.

It is our duty to be "quick to hear, slow to speak," slowest of all to speak evil or to encourage others to speak it, by giving them our attention. Against what the good men say of one another we need not be on our guard, for they rarely exaggerate the merits of their neighbors.

CURIOUS CORRESPONDENCE.

European writers are fond of saying that the almighty dollar is the god of Brother Jonathan; but, really, Americans are less under the sway of the aforesaid dollar than the English are under that of the omniscient guinea.

In the new English Life of William Pitt there is a short correspondence between that world-renowned prime minister and the Bishop of Lichfield and Coventry, which is very amusing, and which well illustrates the fact we have stated. This bishop was brother to the Earl of Cornwallis, who surrendered at Yorktown. Both the bishop and the earl had been expecting advancement—the bishop to a more *lucrative* see, and the earl to some new distinction, civil or military. A fat bishopric, at length, fell vacant, to which the Bishop of Lichfield was *not* appointed. Smarting under his disappointment, the bishop wrote to the prime minister an angry note:

Wimpole-street, June 10, 1791.

Sir—After the various instances of neglect and contempt which Lord Cornwallis and I have experienced, not only in violation of repeated assurances, but of the strongest ties, it is impossible that I should not feel the late disappointment very deeply.

With respect to the proposal concerning Salisbury, I have no hesitation in saying that the See of Salisbury cannot be in any respect an object to me. The only arrangement which promises an accommodation in my favor is the promotion of the Bishop of Lincoln to Salisbury, which would enable you to confer the Deanery of St. Paul's upon me.

I have the honor to be, &c.,

J. Lichfield and Coventry.

To this arrogant and insulting epistle, Mr. Pitt replied in the following manner:

Downing-street, Saturday Night, June 11, 1791.

My Lord—On my return to town this afternoon I found your Lordship's letter. I am willing to hope that on further consideration, and on recollecting all the circumstances, there are parts of that letter which you would yourself wish never to have written.

My respect for your Lordship's situation, and my regard for Lord Cornwallis, prevent my saying more than that, until that letter is recalled, your Lordship makes any further intercourse between you and me impossible.

I have the honor to be, &c., W. Pitt.

The bishop "came down." He immediately wrote a truly meek reply:

Wimpole-street, June 11, 1791.

Sir—Under the very great disappointment which I have felt upon the late occasion, I am much concerned that I was induced to make use of expressions in my letter to you of which I have since repented, and which upon consideration I beg leave to retract, and I hope that they will make no unfavorable impression upon your mind.

Whatever may be your thoughts respecting the subject matter of the letter, I trust that you will have the candor to pardon those parts of it which may appear to be wanting in due and proper respect to you, and believe me to have the honor, &c., J. Lichfield and Coventry.

To this letter the minister replied the next day as follows:

Downing-street, June 12, 1791.

My Lord—I have this morning received the honor of your Lordship's letter, dated the 11th, and have great satisfaction in being able to dismiss from my mind any impression occasioned by a paragraph in the former letter which I received from you.

With respect to any further arrangement, I can only say that I have no reason to believe that the Bishop of Lincoln would wish to remove to Salisbury; but if he were, I should certainly have no hesitation in recommending your Lordship for the Deanery of St. Paul's.

I have the honor to be, &c., W. Pitt.

This penitential letter of the bishop produced substantial results. His name appeared, ere long, in the Gazette as Dean of Durham; involving an addition to his income equal to the united salaries of ten American clergymen of distinction. So they do things in England.

Without boasting of our own clergy, we can say of them with perfect truth, that, as a body, they have not been, and are not, mercenary. If they remove from one church to another, it is *generally* because they believe that they can labor with better effect by so doing. Nor are there among them many men mean enough to accept the revenues of a church, and leave the duty thereof to be discharged by a deputy. Upon the whole, it is time to stop talking about the Almighty Dollar, and discourse a little upon the influential *pound sterling*, and the forcible *franc*.

A REWARD OF $500.

A committee of well-known citizens offer a reward of five hundred dollars for any one who will apprehend the words and music of a National Hymn, or two hundred and fifty dollars for either captured alone; the further conditions are that the words must be peaceable in their demeanor, breathing no battle or havoc, but all the divine serenities.

The object of this is to supply a deficiency, it must be; otherwise Hail Columbia or The Star-Spangled Banner would answer.

O, Committee! know ye not that God does not deign to visit the poetic-musical soul by the offer of a reward for a nation's concentrated fire?

O, Committee! How can the heat of battle, the peril of war, the mighty heroism of hosts be subtracted from a National Lyric, and yet make it it glow, and start the wild pulsations of the heart?

O, Committee! Peace needs no national hymn beyond the corn-field, and the work-shop, and the mart, and all the prosperity which sings with joy.

O, Committee! The eloquence of Demosthenes, of Cicero, of Chatham, of Mirabeau, of Webster, was the electric product of perils and arms and the rapt ecstacies which only war and rumors of war can confer; and so with the lyrics of the musician-poet when addressed to the national heart.

STREET MUSIC.

What has become of the hand-organs and the grinders thereof? Three-fourths of them are *non est*. A year ago almost every family uptown was besieged by troops of crank-turning itinerants, and long-tailed monkeys in red petticoats and feathered caps were so common in our streets that the children hardly turned to look at them. Now one rarely sees a wandering minstrel either alone or with his "jack-an-ape," and the opera airs that made the evenings musical are seldom heard in our streets. The reason, doubtless, is that the Italian troubadours discourse a kind of music too gentle for these troublous times. Martial tunes are the order of the day. The cry is "Sound trumpets, strike alarum drums!" and in the "clamorous report of war" is drowned all milder minstrelsy.

IMPUDENCE OF THE OLD NEWSPAPERS.

The newspaper writers of the last century were sometimes much more saucy to the ladies than any modern editor would dare to be. We have seen a copy of Faulkner's Journal, published in London in 1744, in which ladies are instructed to "lay aside their hoops, however ornamental," in order to make room for a hundred more persons than could otherwise be admitted to the performance of Handel's Messiah. In an advertisement published fifty years later, the ladies were strictly enjoined not to come to a certain festival at Westminster with full-sized hoops, if any. We should like to see a musical director issue a similar "vermillion edict" to the beauty and fashion of the present day. Wouldn't there be a row?

THE BURNING OF WASHINGTON.

Rear Admiral Sir George Cockburn, who commanded a blockading fleet in the waters of the Chesapeake during the years 1813 and 1814, had matters pretty much his own way for some fifteen or eighteen months. A flotilla, commanded by Commodore Barney, had given him some annoyance, but this had finally been compelled to take refuge far up the Patuxent river, and he was left free to menace Baltimore, Annapolis, and even Washington, neither of which cities, from some strange infatuation of the government and people that the enemy would not venture to attack them, could show any state of defence, and scarcely boast of more than a corporal's guard. Considering that two years had elapsed since the declaration of war, and that for a year and a half the piratical crew of Cockburn had been cruising in the Chesapeake and along the coast of North Carolina, committing the most wanton depredations upon all defenceless places and citizens, this apathy of the government to the danger menacing the larger cities, is somewhat remarkable, and appears to us very reprehensible. An attempt had been made to burn Norfolk, and the British had been signally repulsed, with considerable slaughter, by the gallant defence of a few hastily assembled militia, and this fact had been used against the timid and cautious as a proof that the enemy would never think of venturing to attack either of the other places we have named.

At length the government at Washington received the news of the abdication of Napoleon, and with it the startling intelligence that England, having a great number of veteran troops now to spare, was about to dispatch a large force to the United States, to prosecute the war with a crushing vigor. This seemed to rouse up the sleepy administration a little, and it really went so far as to talk about doing something in the way of defence. A new military district, comprising Maryland, the District of Columbia, and a part of Virginia, was formed, and the command given to General Winder, of Maryland, and some blank circulars were printed for a requisition upon certain states for ninety thousand men, but which, if ever sent, were never sent in time to be of any benefit to the country.

On receiving his appointment, early in July, as commander of the Tenth Military District, General Winder set vigorously to work to organize a force for its protection; but such were the difficulties he had to encounter, that when the enemy's fleet of sixty sail arrived in the Chesapeake the following month, he had not two thousand men at his command. They showed him on paper where there was a splendid force of sixteen thousand ardent defenders of their country; but unfortunately General Winder never got a sight of more than three thousand, half of whom where raw recruits, whose officers he did not know, and a large portion of whom broke and run at the first sight of the enemy. General Winder has been severely censured for allowing the enemy to march on Washington and burn the capitol; but we have made an impartial examination into all the facts, and think he did, under the circumstances, all that one human being could do, having been up night and day and in the saddle till completely broken down, and failing, in spite of his exertions, to collect and concentrate a sufficient force to stop the advance of the foe. It is the easiest thing in the world to blame a man for failure, and very few stop to inquire whether their censure is deserved or not.

The enemy, knowing as he did the defenceless condition of the coast and cities, and determined to keep what little Federal force there was, as much divided and perplexed as possible, now made three divisions of his fleet, and sent one up the Potomac, threatening Washington, one up the Chesapeake, threatening Annapolis and Baltimore, while the main body ascended the Patuxent, menacing the whole three and Commodore Barney's flotilla besides.

It is with the force in the Patuxent we have now to do. At a place called Benedict, forty miles from Washington, between five and six thousand British troops were landed on the 19th and 20th of August. These, commanded by General Ross, took up their march on the 21st, and proceeded as far as Nottingham, where they encamped—Cockburn and his piratical crew, with a large flotilla of launches and barges, keeping on their right flank up the river. The next day the land force reached Marlborough, and the British flotilla came in sight of Barney's flotilla, which was immediately set on fire and destroyed by some sailors left in charge for that purpose. On the afternoon of the 22nd, the enemy advanced five miles, and, after some slight skirmishing with a small American force, again halted for the night.

Up to this time it was not known to General Winder where the enemy intended to strike, and a consultation with President Madison and his cabinet left him as wise as before. It was generally believed now that Washington was in some danger; and as the city could offer no defence whatever, and as any effective resistance would have to be made before the enemy reached it, it consequently became a matter of the greatest anxiety and perplexity as to which, of some two or three routes, he would take, and where and in what manner he could be most successfully opposed. With several detachments of raw recruits pouring in upon him, all nearly starved, and fatigued with long marches—with his only reliable force scattered here, there and yonder, some as videttes, some as skirmishers, with others posted on different roads at different points, to harass and retard the enemy—himself nearly worn down by constant vigilance and almost superhuman exertions to get matters into proper military shape—General Winder had the further delightful satisfaction of receiving all sorts of advice from President Madison and his Cabinet Secretaries, no two of whom thought alike on anything, and some of whom changed their minds at least three or four times the same day. Under these circumstances, that Winder got his forces together at all, and made anything like a respectable resistance, instead of actually going mad over his troubles, is the only wonder we have.

At the town of Bladensburg, some five or six miles from Washington, the larger part of the American force made a stand, and opened a somewhat effective fire upon the head of the British column, as it appeared upon the brow of a hill, about twelve o'clock, on the 24th of August; but the British regulars, firing rockets and pressing steadily forward, soon put the raw recruits to flight, and compelled the more disciplined soldiers to a hasty retreat. After this, Commodore Barney, with his sailors, a few marines, and some volunteers, opened upon the enemy a most destructive fire of grape and musketry; but the gallant Commodore was soon outflanked, his brave little band either killed or put to rout, and he himself wounded and taken prisoner.

At the opening of the contest at Bladensburg, President Madison and several of the heads of departments were with General Winder, overlooking the scene of operations; but at the commencement of the action the Chief Magistrate and suite withdrew and rode back to Washington, where they made their preparations for a hasty departure, foreseeing the inevitable fortunes of the day. The alarm soon became general, soldiers and citizens were everywhere seen flying for their lives, and the British forces, after silencing Barney's battery, marched steadily forward with little or no opposition.

At this time Washington numbered about nine hundred houses, which were not compact or central, but scattered in groups over a space of several miles. The principal buildings were the President's House and the Capitol, both constructed of white free-stone, and models of architectural beauty; and these the British general, counseled by the infamous Cockburn, determined to destroy—an act of vandalism that the English nation has been ashamed of from that day to this. Halting the main body of his army about a mile and a half from the Capitol, General Ross, accompanied by Cockburn and some seven hundred choice spirits, marched in triumph into the almost deserted city, and proceeded to the President's House, where they found the table spread and wines in cool, to which the officers helped themselves, and to whatever else they fancied, and then set the building on fire. By a signal, the splendid but unfinished Capitol was fired at the same time; and soon the Senate House, and House of Representatives, the Treasury and War Offices, with all the valuable furniture, libraries, archives, and public documents of the nation, were sending forth their volumes of smoke and flame and ghastly light. Besides these principal buildings, the enemy fired a private rope-walk, a hotel, the great bridge across the Potomac, and several private dwellings. The navy-yard was fired by order of the President, and a frigate on the stocks and a sloop of war were consumed with the rest.

As the flames of the burning city writhed, whirled and leaped far aloft into the sultry air of that hot August night, their lurid light was sent far and wide, over hundreds and thousands of square miles of territory, falling upon eyes glaring with terror, upon eyes dim with tears, upon eyes gleaming with hate, and rousing every patriotic heart to a prayer for vengeance upon the foe. Pale, beautiful faces looked at the awful glare from their windows within the city, from their house-tops and hill-tops in the country, and stern men, with knit brows, grinding teeth and clinched hands, gazed at it from highways and bye-ways, from hill and from hollow, from wood, field and river. Men who had sunk down with fatigue, sprung to their feet to behold the sight; soldiers who had ingloriously fled from the foe, grew crimson with shame and vowed to redeem their honor; and poor fellows, dying with fatigue and horrible wounds, turned their sometimes pale and sometimes bloody faces to the light, and stared at it till their eyes grew dim and glazed in death. Thousands and tens of thousands beheld that desolating sight. It was looked upon by President Madison and his suite, as wanderers and refugees from the nation's home, they wound slowly and gloomily over the hills of Virginia. The glowing heavens were even seen in the distant city of Baltimore, filling the minds of men with gloom and dread and fear, and then rousing that stern spirit of vengeance which nothing but death could conquer. It was a fire in the heart of the nation, which enkindled a more terrible fire in the hearts of the people. Who shall burn our nation's capital with impunity?

On that memorable night, the infamous Cockburn rode a mare, followed by a colt, through the streets and avenues of the burning city, swearing, swaggering, shouting and singing in drunken glee, cursing the Americans and their government, uttering coarse and ribald jests, and boasting of his previous damnable exploits, and displaying articles of value that, like any common thief, he had stolen from the House of the President. It was a night of terror to the few inhabitants that had not deserted their homes and altars. The main body of the enemy, with his wounded and dying, was bivouacked on Capitol Hill; but armed bands of soldiers and sailors patrolled the streets, insulting and abusing all the citizens they met; while squads of thieves, robbers and assassins, roamed unmolested, and broke open and plundered shops, stores and private dwellings.

The next day the reign of terror still continued. Cockburn and a gang of his sailors entered the office of the National Intelligencer, broke the presses, threw the types out of the windows, and, with his own hands, assisted in carrying a valuable library, of several hundred volumes, into the street and burning it. Not content with the Vandalism already committed, several of the British officers collected around the monument commemorative of the soldiers killed in the war in Tripoli, and mutilated it in a most disgraceful manner. A party of two hundred, sent down to Greenleaf's Point, to commit further destruction, met with a terrible retribution. Here were an arsenal and two other public buildings, which had been partly destroyed by the Americans, who, in the hopes of saving the powder, had thrown large quantities into a dry well. One of the British artillery men, chancing to drop a lighted port-fire into this well, it suddenly blew up, together with a magazine of shells a few yards distant. The explosion was terrific, and in an instant more than fifty men were either torn to pieces, or lay quivering and groaning upon the earth, horribly mutilated, and many of them in the agonies of death.

Toward evening of this eventful day, General Ross issued an order, commanding the citizens not to leave their houses, on pain of death, from the setting to the rising of the sun. The idea given out was that the army was about to march on a secret expedition of destruction; but as soon as it was dark, word was passed in whispers among the officers that it was to be a speedy retreat to their vessels. Combustibles were thrown upon the now slumbering fires, a few soldiers were so stationed as to be seen there by the light, and then in silence and haste the main body stole off from the ruined city, bearing a portion of their wounded with them, and leaving others, with their dead, to the mercy of the foes they had so wantonly abused.

In this expedition the British lost over a thousand men, and roused a feeling of bitter hate that told upon them in every subsequent battle, and for many a long year after their armies and fleets had been withdrawn from the American shores.

LADY LETTER-WRITERS.

We believe it is generally admitted that a woman of even average acquirements can write a better letter than a man. We think there are two good reasons for this. First, they are not above narrating the *little* things which bring up a person or a scene more vividly to the mind than any thing else. They write *naturally*, as they talk; while a man takes his pen too often in the mood in which he would mount a platform to address his "fellow-citizens," using big words, and stiltified language. Hence a man's letters are for the most part stiff and uninteresting. Commend us to a woman's letter when information about home matters, or any other matters, is really needed. In making these remarks, we do not forget a sentimental class of female letter writers; they are the exceptions, and any one who has patience, may read their wordy, idea-less effusions. We cannot. Still every one of us must remember when absent, letters from some female member of the family, which were worth more than all that the collected male intellect of the household could furnish. You, and you, and you—have them now we dare say, stained by time and perhaps tears, yet still precious above rubies.

Fanny Fern.

LORD JEFFREY, EDWARD EVERETT, AND GEORGE BANCROFT.

[The following letter contains a statement concerning a prophecy of Lord Jeffrey's as to the future greatness of Edward Everett, made when the latter was a brilliant boy, which goes far to show that that distinguished reviewer's judgment of character was as sagacious and trustworthy as his judgment of books. The letter also contains other valuable reminiscences of Lord Jeffrey which the reader will find to be highly interesting.]

Savannah, 21st Feb'y, 1861.

My Dear Mr. Allibone:—I owe you an apology for permitting your very kind notes to remain so long unacknowledged. Ill-health will, I trust, plead for me. In your first note, you tell me that you were interested in what I told you of my visit to Lord Jeffrey—of his remarks about our dear friend, Edward Everett, and you kindly ask me to send them to you in a letter, that you may some day publish it. This I candidly confess has deterred me from writing, but it is no excuse for my neglect of your letters.

In the books of reference before you, you have seen, as you tell me, my humble name mentioned by our own historians and biographers, as having furnished *materials*, and this, my dear sir, is really all I have done, except a few published letters as corresponding secretary of the Georgia Historical Society formed in 1839, and of which I am one of the three founders, viz., Rev. Dr. Wm. Bacon Stephens, of your city, Dr. R. D. Arnold, and myself. But no matter; that has nothing to do with Lord Jeffrey and Mr. Everett.

In the summer of 1847, the health of my youngest son, Charles E. T., who had been recently admitted to the bar, became enfeebled, and I determined to take him to Europe, in the hope that a sea voyage might save him—but it was too late. He survived but a few years. We reached Edinburgh late in August, at a time when *few persons were at home*, and hence our letters of introduction were not delivered.

On my arrival I called upon my friend and correspondent, Dr. Moir, who, on looking over my letters, suggested that I should leave the one addressed to Lord Jeffrey at his town house. I did so. The same morning Lord J. and wife called at our hotel, and finding us out, he left a very kind note, inviting us to lunch the next day at his residence, Craigcrook, (about four miles from Edinburgh,) as his health did not permit him to receive his friends at dinner. We went at the hour appointed, (2 o'clock,) and were kindly received. Lord J. in person appeared below the medium size, though graceful and well proportioned. He was *very* plainly dressed. In conversation he was quick, animated, affable and playful. Whilst holding my hand he remarked: I went to America in 1813 to marry that *girl*, pointing to Mrs. Jeffrey on the opposite side of the room. (Yes, I said, Miss Wilkes; I had daily intercourse with her father, Mr. Charles Wilkes, Cashier, in New York, during the year 1815.) A week after we were married, he continued, we went to Albany, thence to Boston in a stage coach—the same route, as I trace it on your map, of your present railroad. On our arrival in Boston we went to the Marlborough Hotel, and whilst in the office engaging rooms, I was accosted by that prince of merchants, Col. Tom. Perkins, thus: My dear friend, yourself and wife must go at once to my house; to which I replied we could not; that we had just arrived from Albany, covered with dust, but we would come and see him as soon as Mrs. J. could change her dress. Ah! he exclaimed, you are obliged to go home with me now. I *seized* your baggage the moment you left the coach and entered the hotel, and it is now in my house in a room prepared for your reception, and my carriage is waiting for you. So we were obliged to accept the kind hospitality of that prince of merchants.

The next day the Col. took me to Cambridge to visit Harvard University. On entering the building, I was so struck with the appearance of a youth that I made a note of it at the time. I put some questions to him, which he answered so promptly, that I ventured to say to the President, *That* youth deserves to be in a higher place. The reply was that he would be there soon enough; nothing but his age prevented it now, and he continued, with a good deal of emphasis, I subsequently met that *youth* as the representative of your great country at the Court of St. James. (I replied, Mr. Everett?) Yes, sir, Edward Everett.

I spent many hours with him during my visits to Craigcrook. On the occasion of our first visit, the afternoon was showery, though the sun was shining most of the time. He invited us to walk over his grounds. On leaving the parlor, he opened a small closet in the entry, and playfully placed one of his overcoats upon my son, who was small, remarking to him that it was an excellent *fit*, adding, Though it is not my *mantle*, it is my *coat*. During our long walks, his conversation was confined principally to the eminent men of this country, with whose names he was very familiar. He complimented very highly Mr. Bancroft's History of the U. S., which he was then reading as far as published for the third time, admired his notes of reference at the bottom of the page, which he always found correct. He was expecting a visit from the distinguished historian, Mr. Bancroft, who was at the time our Minister in London.

My lamented son, writing home, gives the following description of Lord Jeffrey: "His eyes are penetrating and intelligent, while his forehead is large and well developed. Craigcrook was originaly the chapelry of Holyrood Abbey, and afterwards, by inheritance, became the property of this distinguished author. The writings of Irving and the historian Bancroft he read with a great deal of pleasure. Age, I think, has softened many of his strong propensities for the love of satire and criticism of the early days of his literary career.

"Among the most interesting rooms at Craigcrook was his cosy little library of books of reference, whither he conducted us. Its only window looked upon his beautiful grounds. In the centre of this apartment is an ancient table covered with plain green baize. Upon this table, he told us, most of his essays were written for the Edinburgh Review.

"Such was the gratification created of seeing this extraordinary man, that it has formed of itself some of the most pleasing associations of our jaunt across the water."

Pardon, my dear Mr. Allibone, my hurriedly written letter, and believe me, with the kindest regards to your dear friend, Mr. Childs,

Very truly your friend, J. K. Tefft.

S. Austin Allibone, Esq., *Philadelphia*.

GREAT TROUBLES SOON OVER.

In winter it is difficult even to think of the earth as clad in the green and flowers of summer. So, in times of trial and distress, a large number of persons give way to utter despair, as though prosperity could never return.

It is, nevertheless, true, that the causes of prosperity are constant in their operation, and that causes of misfortune are evanescent. The rivers flow always; the forces of nature never tire or cease; the soil and the sea produce their annual average of wealth. The passions of man, which disturb the flow and gathering of nature's beneficence, are violent; and because they are violent they are soon exhausted. Gentle love and friendship are lasting; fierce hate and anger are necessarily short. All the permanent influences of nature and civilization lead to peace and plenty. Short is the career of a tornado; short the volcanic eruption; and the crashing thunder-storm is short. Everything in nature and in life, that is not gentle and beneficial, is exceptional and of brief duration. If the river rushes furiously down the rocky steep, it is that it may the sooner reach the tranquil lake. If the lightning and the thunder are peculiarly terrific, it is because nature is wildly impatient to restore the lost equilibrium of the elements which is peace and safety to all her creatures.

How wise was that philosopher who, on being asked for a maxim which would serve both for a warning in prosperity and a consolation in adversity, gave the following: "This, too, will pass away!"

CHEERFUL TEMPER.

Who would not have an eye
To see the sun, where others see a cloud;
A frame so vernal, as, in spite of snow,
To think it genial summer all year round?
I do not know the fool would not be such
A man!

◆

The manners which are neglected as small things are often those which decide men for or against you.

LEGEND OF THE SUN-DIAL.

BY WILLIAM ROSS WALLACE.

I.

"*I only mark the hours that shine!*"*
Sweet legend of the Dial-plate,
Would that beneath the Orb of Fate
Man's Heart could hold such joys as thine!
How fair would Memory's banner shine
From cradle to the grave!

II.

But such not for Humanity—
Too different the nature given,
By yon mysterious, awful Heaven,
Beneath its wondrous Destiny!
The Heart *must* mark the hours of *Night*
As well as those of Light.

III.

Yet, Soul, if thou would'st be sublime,
O let thy mystic Dial-plate
Tower bravely up unto that Fate,
And firmly take the shades of Time!
Even Sorrow's darkest hours are grand,
Flung from the Eternal Hand.

IV.

Sun-Dial, I that wish recall!
This difference of the Soul from thee
Proves her own great divinity
And flight at last o'er matter's wall:
Then, Spirit, mark the hours of *Night*
As well as those of Light!

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* A sentence engraved on the Sun-Dials of a celebrated manufactory in this country.

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THE HUNTED FELON;

OR,

THE FORTUNE-TELLER OF LYNN.

A ROMANCE OF THE OLDEN TIME.

BY MRS. C. F. GERRY.

CHAPTER X.

Will all Neptune's ocean wash this blood
Clean from my hand? No, this my hand will rather
The multitudinous seas incarnadine! SHAKSPEARE.

Goaded by fear, stung by remorse, the hunted felon left far behind the marshes, caves, and woods of Lynn and Nahant, and plunged into the wilds of New Hampshire. Now and then, half dead with hunger, the guilty creature stopped at a wayside inn, but there travellers discussed among stirring war news, the terrible murder in Lynn, and the criminal dared not stay, where the flushed cheek and trembling frame would betray that dark secret. Two or three times, in the midst of the spring rains, a shelter was sought at the cheery fireside of some farmer, but here too the good-wife talked, and the children shuddered over poor Mabel's tragic fate. On reaching Deerfield, a beautiful and quiet town, the weary felon ventured into a small tavern, in the hope of obtaining a morsel of food, and a glass of what the Indians fitly denominated fire-water. The little bar-room was crowded with guests, who, over their tankards of beer, declared that they were on the search for the murderer of Captain Ward's daughter, having obtained a requisition from the Governor of the Colony of Massachusetts to arrest any suspicious persons. Forgetting the caution which would have been politic under such circumstances, the felon precipitately retreated. This hasty departure, together with his haggard face, and "uncanny" aspect, was commented upon by the hostler, and the officers started in pursuit. But the criminal took the precaution to bind on his shoes, with the heels in front, and thus the pursuers were misled. On, on, on they dashed, and on, on, on, in the opposite direction, sped the criminal. Through the grand, old Deerfield woods, along the banks of Pleasant Pond, and amid the fastnesses in the neighborhood of the Gulf—fastnesses seldom trod at this day, and in those times as solitary as the lone haunts of the Sierra Nevada. On the brink of one of the steep precipices, which go shelving down, down to a deep and narrow ravine, he paused. For an instant a mad impulse seized him to leap into the gloom, but desperate as he was, he shrank from the dread unknown. He drew back, and lay, denned there, till hunger drove him forth. Then he plunged into the dense forests to the northward, till he reached a spring at the foot of a cleared hill, on which he saw, to his astonishment, what appeared to be a village. At the place where he stopped, five roads now meet, and the waters of the spring bubble with a perpetual flow, and a pleasant, dreamy murmur, into a huge, granite basin. The panting horse of the traveller drinks there, the cattle when they come straying down from the distant, green pastures at eventide, quaff that pure tide, and the vagabond refreshes himself with a draught cooler than Oriental Sherbet, more delicious and life-giving than the best blood of the grape, or the mythic nectar, sipped from golden goblets by the Gods of high Olympus. The felon drank long and eagerly, bathed his flushed and heated brow, and plunged his hands into the fountain, as if he would wash off the blood-stains, which to his excited fancy seemed to redden his palms. Night closed in, and wearily, wearily he toiled up the hill to the door of the first house. He rapped, and a tall man in a drab coat and broad-brimmed hat, appeared on the threshold.

"Is this an inn?" asked the wayfarer.

"Nay—oh, nay; 'tis the Trustees' Office of the Shakers."

"And what are the Shakers?" and there was wild eagerness in his face as he spoke.

"A United Society of Believers, who have obeyed the Lord's command to come out from the world and be separate. Like the Apostles, we have all things in common. We will not bear arms; for we read in the Gospel that he who takes the sword shall perish by the sword. We neither marry, nor are given in marriage, but are as the Angels of God."

"I—I never heard of you before," faltered the felon; "but will you take in a stranger, who wants rest?"

"Yea; we do not often turn poor travellers away."

"I am not poor, as far as money is concerned. I have more gold than I can find a use for; but I am poor in friends—in everything that makes life pleasant."

"You need such a refuge as we can offer you," exclaimed the elder. "Come in."

"A thousand thanks! I shall be only too thankful for your kindness!" And the criminal followed his host into a room destitute of every kind of ornament, but so neat, so comfortable, that he sank down with a sigh of relief. A lunch was brought him, which he devoured with ravenous haste; and then he was conducted into a small room, with a sanded floor, a bed covered with a gray counterpane, a stiff chair or two, and a light-stand, all of Shaker manufacture. For the first time in many weeks, the hunted felon slept beneath a roof, and on a comfortable bed. Several times during the night he started up in terror, thinking that he had been discovered by his pursuers; but when he found himself safe, he grew quiet, and again fell asleep. At an early hour the next day he was astir. When he went forth into the village, dense clouds of mist shut out the prospect, and rain-drops clung to every leaf and the tender blades of grass. At length, however, a glow began to burn through the mist, like rosy light through a crystal vase; then the vapor melted away, and the sun rose, flushing the East like an altar-fire, and kindling earth and sky into beauty. Beyond the neat dwellings, broad fields and trim fences of the Shaker settlement, he saw pleasant reaches of hill, and valley, and woodland, with blue lakes glimmering here and there, and farther off the bold Guilford Mountains, cutting sharply against the sky. While he was gazing around in silence, the elder who had admitted him the night previous, moved to his side.

"Well," he said, "what do you think of us?"

"I like your faith! Love is but a dream; 'tis best to renounce it; the world is full of falsehood, wretchedness, guilt—here I shall find peace!"

"Heaven grant it, friend! And now who are you?"

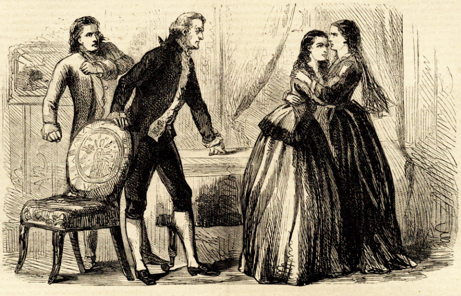
"Let my real name be a secret! It is sufficient for you to know that at twenty-five life has lost all which charmed me once. I will, however, tell you I am of foreign parentage, whether noble or ignoble it matters not to you."

"Nay, we are commanded to have no respect of persons," rejoined the Elder, "but it is contrary to receive members as you wish to come. I will, however, in this instance."

The stranger expressed his thanks, and begged the Shaker to give him a name.

He hesitated an instant, and then said:

"Reuben Shaw has just died—he was a godly man, and I will give you his name. May his mantle fall upon you!"



MOTHER AND DAUGHTER.

A strange smile passed over the dark face of the felon, but he made no answer. Not long afterwards he assumed the quaint, Shaker garb, and seemed as zealous as the most devoted of the society.

Summer came, with her rainbows and her showers, her tall grass and green foilage, her singing birds and her roses, and the hunted felon was still a denizen of the Shaker Village. And was he at rest? No, O no; a heavy heart beat beneath his drab coat, remorse gnawed like the vulture, famed in the olden story, and sometimes when he went to drive the cows home, and stopped to drink at a wayside pool, he would be startled by the wild eyes, the haggard face which it mirrored. One day as he was at work in the hay fields, he heard the men discussing Mabel Ward's murder, and the probabilities of the felon's final escape.

"I'll tell you what," exclaimed a keen-sighted youth, "I have my doubts as to our new brother."

"Hush," interposed an elderly man, "he'll hear you!"

"I'm sure I didn't know he was in this part of the field; I'll hold my tongue till he's out of hearing!"

That night, when the Shaker settlement was as quiet as a churchyard, and the stars burned like the eyes of vestal watchers overhead, the criminal left the home where he had found a refuge, and in a new disguise, which he had stolen from a farmer's entry where clothing was hung, resumed his wanderings.

"If I can only reach those mountains," he said, aloud, as he gazed beyond the green hills of Northfield, beyond the Sautnuton bays, beyond the beautiful heights which encircle Lake Winnipisseogee, at the White Mountains, looming up like cliffs of alabaster; "if I could reach their dim passes, I should feel safe!"

With these words he pressed on, travelling day and night, and two or three weeks afterward found himself domesticated in a hunter's cabin near that beautiful lake which the Indians so poetically named the Great Spirit's Smile. This place, like Nahant, has now become a fashionable resort; a steamer traverses the lake, and flocks of gay people visit its beautiful islets. But then its solitude was unbroken, save by the bark of the hunter's dog, and the horn, with which the good-wife called her pioneer husband to dinner. But one night, as the felon sat by the hunter's fire, the awful subject of Mabel Ward's murder was again brought up, and fearing that he might be suspected, should he dare remain, he fled ere the dawn kindled her altar fires.

"I will not allow myself to stop for food or rest till I reach the solitudes where no foot save mine and that of the fox and wolf may tread!" he muttered, as he pressed on toward the White Hills.

At last—at last, with torn garments and bruised and bleeding feet, he gained the fastnesses of the grand old mountains. There were vales solemn with perpetual shadows, but he thought of them only as places of refuge; there were hights, now wrapped in the rainbow, and now in the cloud, where a single misstep would send you into some vortex dark as those waves which go drifting on to the "Night's Plutonian shores;" cataracts that sent up showers of spray; snows which never melted from year to year; crags where wild birds had their eyries; springs whose clear, moss-brimmed waters seemed fair as the fabled fount, which the Spanish adventurers hoped might "bring their lost youth back;" streams that broadened and broadened till they became great rivers, and swept with a strong current to the sea; and one grim face shaped from the solid rock, and known to travellers as the Old Man of the Mountain. But the felon, who had been hunted like a deer, could not enjoy the magnificent scenery spread out around him. The mountain dews could not wash the brand of murderer from his brows; no mountain spring could efface the stain that clung to his hand. We all know that solitude is a torture to the guilty, and can imagine the fiery ordeal through which he now passed. The wind seemed whispering his guilt, the thunder echoed it, the forked lightning wrote it on summits far, far above him. What could he do? Half-maddened, he left the lone mountains, and journeyed back as fast as his stiffened limbs could carry him. When he reached a house, he stole a woman's costume from the family who sheltered him during the night, and thus disguised, travelled without suspicion. When questioned by an inquisitive farmer, he asserted that he was a poor women travelling to see a sick sister in Massachusetts Colony, and at length found himself in Boston.

CHAPTER XI.

"Slowly folding, how she lingered
O'er the words his hand had traced."

Grace Ward sat alone in one of the rooms which had been appropriated to her in her uncle's mansion. The vine-wreathed lattice, the graceful divans, the heaps of cushions piled here and there like sunset clouds, the guitar inlaid with pearl and silver, the pale Egyptian lilies blooming in quaint urns, the models of pagodas and mosques, and the miniature fountain, which threw up tiny jets of perfumed waters, lent an air of oriental splendor to the apartment. But to the girl, sitting there in silence, it seemed a gorgeous prison-house. Her uncle maintained a rigid surveillance over her, and no message from her Rebel lover had been allowed to reach her, while Heathcote was a constant visitor. The more she saw of him the less she liked what Moll, in her soliloquy, had called his deceitful blue eye, his forced smile, and bland tones, and she was thinking of him in no enviable mood when there was a rap at her door. She opened it, and beheld Moll Pitcher, the fortune-teller of Lynn. The weird woman gazed at her searchingly for an instant, then glided in, and bolted the door.

"Grace Ward," she said at length, "you have grown pale, and there's an uneasy tremor about your mouth—what is the matter?"

"O!" exclaimed the girl, "I am very, very wretched!"

"I know it—I know you are little better than a prisoner, and Ralph Heathcote's the cause of all your troubles, for he has sworn that you shall be his, by fair means or foul!"

She paused a moment, and then resumed in a whisper:

"I am sure you can keep a secret, and therefore I shall trust you. Your worshipful cousin flatters himself that I am helping him—let him think so for the present—when the hour for which I am waiting comes, he shall know I have played him false, and why, too! He supposes I am here now for the purpose of slandering Richard Crofton, and praising *him*, but I have other business with you."

"What is it?"

"I have just seen the young master of the Petrel!"

Grace Ward's cheek flushed, but the rich glow faded as she murmured:

"Have—have you any—evil tidings to communicate?"

"No, O no. There are brave news of him and his gallant crew! They have had stirring times at sea, and taken three prizes already—they have sailed into our harbor with the prize-ships in tow, and what is most noble of all his noble acts, Richard Crofton will take nought but a common sailor's wages while his country is so poor."

Again the blood surged over the maiden's cheek and brow, and crimsoned her white neck; warm tears rained from her eyes, and she clasped her arms around Moll's lithe figure, and drew her to her heart in a convulsive embrace.

"Well," continued the weird woman, "as soon as we had exchanged greetings, he asked if you were married to Mr. Heathcote. I told him you were not, and then he made a thousand inquiries, and I answered them to the best of my ability. I offered to bring any message he might wish to send you, and he sat down on a log in the Saugus woods and wrote this on a blank leaf he tore from his pocket-Bible." And Moll drew forth a folded paper.

The girl's white and jewelled fingers tightened nervously around it, and she withdrew to an alcove, and dropping the rose-colored curtains over it, opened the first letter she had ever received from Richard Crofton. It was necessarily brief, but as she read she seemed transported to the fisherman's cottage, where he had avowed his love. Once, twice, thrice she perused it, and then returned to Moll.

"He wishes me to meet him at the great elm in Cambridge," she exclaimed.

"Yes; at twilight he will await you there."

"O, I must go—I must see Richard, but how shall I get away unobserved? I am watched constantly."

"I have planned the whole matter. Mr. Heathcote, wishing me to come here often, has given me the pass-word. Put on my clothes and this black wig, mount my horse in the yard below, and ride down to the 'Golden Key,' where my husband is, I doubt not, drinking and wrestling. He's in the secret, and Robert Pitcher's no fool; when you call out to him sharply that you must be at home to give the children their supper, he'll join you at once. Of course you'll be challenged by the sentinels, but say 'Death to the Rebels,' and they'll let you pass."

Grace eagerly arranged the wig over her abundant tresses, and exchanged her silken robe for Moll's serge short-gown, red skirt, and strange head-gear, descended the staircase, and found herself in the weird woman's saddle. A half hour later she rode up to the inn, where Robert Pitcher was sipping a glass of old English ale on a low seat just outside the door.

"Come," she cried, "'tis high time we were on our way back to Lynn—the little ones will want their supper, and you have a pair of shoes to finish for good-wife Stone."

"The deuse!" exclaimed a dashing British officer, who had just dismounted from his steed. "There's the Lynn witch!"

The next moment he stood at her side, and extending his hand, added:

"Tell me my fortune, mother."

"'Tis not my custom to practice palmistry," replied the seeming Moll, "but I have no objection to revealing what is written on your palm."

She peered into its lines, as if they were indeed the hieroglyphs of destiny, and began—

"There are many crosses in your life; I see you amid warring armies—on the toilsome march, by the red camp-fire, wherever Britain calls her soldiers, you go."

"And now, what of my lady-love—have I yet seen her who is to be my wife?"

"Yes."

"And is she a blonde, or dark, bright and bewitching?"

"The latter," said the disguised Grace, for with a woman's quick intuition she had noticed that he uttered the last four words in a softer tone and with a hightened color.

"By St. George, you're right! At any rate, the woman to whom I am engaged is a brunette! My friends oppose the match, and I doubt not that they will do all in their power to bring about an alliance between myself and a blonde heiress, but I thank you for assuring me that Love will finally triumph over Pride!"

He gave the sibyl a crown, and she soon afterward rode off with Robert Pitcher. The sentinels were passed in safety, and at twilight Grace reached the trysting-place. Richard Crofton sprang to meet her, and led her to a more secluded spot, where they would be unobserved. Then, with a cry of joy, the girl sank into her lover's arms, felt his kisses on her brow and lips, and heard him call her by a thousand endearing names. He told her how, in the lonely night-watch, memories of her had cheered him; how, in the thickest of the fight, his thoughts had roved to her, and he had begged the mate, in case he should fall, to tell Grace that his last prayer in dying had been for her. Grace Ward, with her head pillowed on his breast, assured him of her unchanging love, a trust which nothing could break, and the determination never to marry Heathcote. She told her lover of the visits of the mysterious stranger, and he revealed the fact that he had seen her lurking about his own home while Grace was an inmate. The girl did not forget to praise the bravery of the Patriot captain, and he declared that one word of approval from her was far dearer to him than the applause of the whole world. At length, with solemn protestations of constancy, a long, long embrace, and a half-smothered farewell, they parted, and Grace went back to the memorable elm, where Robert Pitcher was awaiting her. They again passed the ranks safely, and before nine o'clock Captain Ward's porter opened the hall door to what he fancied the veritable Moll Pitcher.

"I want to see Miss Grace," she said.

"Wal, you can't, 'cause she's powerful bad wid de headache. She's locked herself up, and won't let anybody go near her."

"Mr. Heathcote would never forgive me if I failed to deliver his message—let me go to her room."

With these words, the disguised girl glided in, and took her way to her own chamber.

"Who's there?" asked a low voice from within, as she gave a gentle rap.

"Moll Pitcher."

After some parleying, carried on for the benefit of listeners, if there were any, the door was opened, and the seeming sibyl admitted. Grace could hardly suppress a laugh as she met the real Moll, who was as slender as herself, wrapped in a silken dressing-gown, and with a cobweb handkerchief damp with perfumes bound about her head, but Moll laid her finger on her lip, and she was obliged to be silent. They once more exchanged costumes, and Grace warmly thanked Moll, and thrust a broad gold coin into her hand. Bidding the maiden be of good courage, the fortune-teller glided out, and Grace saw her as she rode under the lamp suspended to the proud arch of the gateway.

The next morning, at an early hour, her aunt rapped at her door. She unlocked it, and as the matron entered, she said—

"I hope you are better, child."

Grace assured her she was quite herself again, and they went down to breakfast. Heathcote advanced to meet her, led her to a seat, and with many kind inquiries, took the chair beside her own. When the meal was over, and she was about to retire with her aunt, her uncle called her back.

"Sit down," he exclaimed; "I have much to say to you."

Pale and tremulous, the girl sank into the chair she had just vacated, and Captain Ward went on—

"My wishes with regard to an alliance with your cousin Ralph are well known to you, my dear niece. You have now had time for reflection, and I presume, like any sensible girl, you have decided to accept him."

"No, sir. I have never given him the least encouragement. I will never give my hand without my heart, and that, as you are aware, is another's! If I ever stand at the altar, it will be with Captain Crofton!"

The old aristocrat laughed sneeringly, the young one ejaculated—

"Absurd—deusedly absurd!"

"Absurd or not, my resolution is taken!"

"Grace," resumed her uncle, "remember the condition of your father's will!"

"I do—I have counted the cost—I renounce all my fortune for Richard's sake."

"Renounce your fortune! Girl, you don't know what you are about! Crofton is such a fool, he won't even take the prize money that belongs to him! A pretty home you would have with his infirm father, bed-ridden mother, and crippled sister! Why, I'll be sworn they've no plate but pewter, not a shred of carpeting, and not half enough to eat!"

"And yet," rejoined Grace, "I was never so happy as when I was there. I wish I were under that low roof again. Richard Crofton is in port; I will fly to him if you attempt to drive me to a marriage with one whom I begin to hate!"

"Hate! Aha! say you so, lady!" cried Heathcote; "repeat it!"

"I am not afraid to repeat it, sir—no honorable man would act as you have! Before Richard sails, I will be his wife!"

"Grace, you have made me desperate!" and the young man sprang to his feet, and stood with his head thrown back, his blue eyes glittering like polished steel, and one hand clenched. "Hark ye, if you do carry out your mad threat, the day that witnesses your bridal, he shall die!"

The girl tried to shriek, but she was dumb with a terrible dread; as white and almost as rigid as marble, she sat there.

"Hold, hold, you shall not torture her thus!" exclaimed a voice, so solemn, so thrilling that it startled even Heathcote; yet he had the assurance to ask:

"Who presumes to interfere?"

"I, HER MOTHER!" and the tall, majestic figure of the mysterious visitant, who had manifested such an interest in Grace Ward's welfare, swept toward the group. As she advanced, she flung back her veil, revealing the faded, but still beautiful face of the woman whom the girl remembered as having sung her hymns, and been her guide, her companion, till she had reached her tenth year. She sunk sobbing into her arms, and Captain Ward gasped—

"The gods, Camille's ghost has risen from the grave to upbraid me!"

"No," rejoined the lady; "it is no phantom that meets you! I have been the victim of a dreadful revenge. You recollect Leonore Dupres, the Creole belle, who was the toast of the county, the star of every *fête* which she graced with her presence."

"I do."

"Well, she fell desperately in love with your brother Philip, and left no means untried to win him. But he thought her vain and coquettish, and married me. She became the wife of another gentleman, a rich old planter, but under the mask of friendship, she cherished the deadliest purposes toward me. She waited a few years, thinking that the blow would fall the heavier when we were endeared to each other by the tenderest ties, and then wove her net about us.

She stopped, almost overwhelmed by the retrospect, but finally continued:

"One afternoon a negro groom came to the door with two horses, stating that my husband had been thrown from his own frightened steed, and was lying insensible in a hut by the roadside. I mounted the horse which the groom had brought for me, and he then said that Mr. Ward had just purchased him of Lionel Duncan, Leonore's husband. When I reached the hovel, he seized me, blindfolded me, and gave me a blow which rendered me senseless. I never saw the light of day again till Leonore, stung by remorse on her death-bed, sent the same groom to liberate me. They called me mad; they kept me in a cage within a darkened room, and fed me on the crumbs which fell from my tormentor's table; but I was as sane as I am now!"

At this point of the story Grace sobbed aloud, Captain Ward trembled, and Heathcote grew pale, for she had all the eloquence of French look and gesture.

"Those six years—those six ages," she resumed. "O! my God, what I suffered, as they dragged by. How I yearned for Philip's smile, for one tone of his voice, one glance of the eyes which had never rested on me save in pride and tenderness! How I hungered and thirsted for my child! How often in my agony I seemed to see the gleam of her hair, so like her father's in gloss and color; how often I gathered her close, close to my heart, and woke to know 'twas all a dream! Wild, clamoring prayers went up to heaven in my desperation, but my prison-door was still sealed, my soul yet in darkness. Finally, I began to realize that the trial, fiery as it was, might be for my good; that I had been proud, ay! far too proud, of Philip, of Grace, of my own beauty, of my splendid home. Then I prayed like the poor publican, and answers of peace came, white-robed and gold-pinioned into my heart. Not long after, Leonore died, and I was liberated. As the groom, who had aided her in my abduction, led me out into the sunshine, he started back aghast.

"Good Heavens, missis!" he cried "can you be the woman I put in here six years ago?"

"Can you doubt the evidence of your own senses?"

"Wal, I s'pose you be de one, but ye look like a walking skeleton. Missis, missis, I've never seen a happy minnit since then; she said she'd give me a hundred pounds if I'd do it, and de temptation was great! For de Lord's sake, forgive me!"

"I do," I replied, "as I hope to be forgiven." He clasped my hands, he bathed them with tears, he grovelled at my feet, and showered blessings upon me as I left him. I hastened to my olden home; the servants thought me a ghost, but from my housekeeper I learned that my husband's mind had been poisoned, with regard to me—that he died in the belief that I had been false to him."

For the first time during her narration, she wept, but she soon murmured:

"Well, there is one consolation—if I meet him in Heaven, we shall understand each other. I visited his grave, baptised it with my tears, and followed my child to the North. I feared she would scorn her mother if she had been told what her father had believed, but I lurked about her, and tried to exert some influence in her behalf. I stole to the fisherman's cottage when she was ill, and how I prayed for her recovery, God alone knows. Rufus Ward, your guardianship is ended—a mother claims her child—and—and I, who have known what love is, declare she shall not give her hand without her heart."

"You forget, madam," said her brother-in-law, "that Grace forfeits her fortune if she marries contrary to my wishes."

"He thought me false to him when he made his will," rejoined the woman; "but he could not die till he added a codicil to the effect, that if I ever returned, and my innocence was established, I should have half his wealth. Within a few weeks I have obtained from the proper authorities a copy of this important will, which I can produce if required to do so; the death-bed confession, which proved me innocent, was heard by several persons, who have made affidavits thereto, and thus I am prepared to make good my claims!" All looked confounded, and Grace could only cry in her joy.

"The lost is found, the dead lives, my mother, O, my mother!"

Camille Ward stooped, and kissed her daughter again and again, exclaiming:

"Brother Philip, to-day sees how you have performed your trust, but from this hour your system of espionage shall cease! My sympathies, like hers, are with the Patriots; if she wishes to marry the young master of the Petrel, I will not say her nay! Come, Grace, my darling." As she spoke she moved from the room, but in the hall they were stopped by Heathcote.

"Mad mother of a mad child!" he muttered, "I repeat my threat: the day she becomes Crofton's bride, she shall be a widow!"

"Cousin Ralph has grown desperate with his disappointment," said the captain, apologetically.

Madam Ward smiled—a strange, mocking smile—as she replied:

"Sir, if I mistake not, your Westmoreland kinsman is older in crime than in years. Murder may not be quite a new thing to him!"

She passed out, and Heathcote drew back, pale and terror-stricken. Could it be that she knew he was an accomplice of the felon, for whom such rigid search had been made? He glanced at Captain Ward, and asked:

"What can she mean?"

"Oh, she's probably heard of that duel you fought in the Bois de Boulogne, and has thrown it up to you!"

"Yes, yes—it must be so, it must be so. But mine is no idle threat! The day of their wedding, I shall challenge Crofton, and he will be sure to fall, for I am the best shot in England!" Still his limbs shook, and at every sound he would start and listen, as if a legion of fiends were pursuing him.

CHAPTER XII.

I know St. George's blood-red cross,
Thou mistress of the seas—
But what is she whose streaming bars
Roll out before the breeze? HOLMES.

A week after Richard Crofton's parting with Grace, he was far out at sea. The Petrel, a schooner, mounting fifteen guns, and manned by one hundred brave fellows, was cruising off and on, when the cry, "A sail! a sail!" came ringing down from the masthead.

"Where away?" shouted the captain.

"On our weather beam."

"Make all sail—give chase!" shouted young Crofton, in a voice that rang like a bugle blast.

"Ay, ay, sir!"

Two hours later she was discovered to be a frigate, fired three guns, and hoisted English colors. Not long afterward the privateer run up the American flag, and all hands were immediately called to quarters on board the Petrel. The guns were loaded, and the ship cleared for action. By noon the conflict began by a shot from the frigate, which did not harm our gallant schooner, and was returned with interest by the Petrel. A perfect storm of balls and shot swept to and fro, damaging the rigging, and wounding the brave men. Captain Crofton and his crew, however, proved more than a match for the frigate, and perceiving that her commander was making preparations to bear away, he ordered the Petrel to tack, and thus prevent her escape. At length the frigate's mizen-mast was shot away, bringing down the red cross of St. George, and our hero, fancying that she had struck, directed his men to cease their fire. But in a few moments the action was renewed with still greater spirit, and Captain Crofton finally ordered his crew to board the vessel. The scene on the beck of the frigate I have no power to describe; hand-to-hand they fought, like tigers, and there Richard Crofton was a master-spirit. One man of the frigate's crew seemed to single him out as the object of attack; blow after blow he aimed at the young officer with his cutlass, but he parried them for a long time. In the short, thick-set figure, and sinister face of his antagonist, he had recognized Gervayse Gault, and had said:

"I should be glad to meet you, if you were fighting in a just cause."

Gault's lip curled with a derisive smile, as he rejoined:

"I will fight as long as I have this good right arm, to put down these accursed Rebels, though all the powers of heaven and earth should combine against me!"

The next moment the arm he had raised in such defiance of God and man, was shot half off, and hung mutilated and bleeding at his side. With a fearful oath Gault sank among his wounded companions, and the master of the frigate found himself obliged to surrender.

Capt. Croften now took formal possession of his prize, and gave orders that his own surgeon should attend to the wounded. Then he installed the first mate of the Petrel as commander of the frigate, and once more set sail. The prize-ship, having lost her mizzen-mast, she could not keep pace with the Petrel, but Crofton did not allow his crew to lose sight of her.

Four days after this sea-fight, a British brig was seen bearing down upon the prize, with the evident intention of re-capturing her. The Petrel gave chase, skimming over the waters like a bird upon the wing, and in two hours was alongside. Another desperate conflict ensued, but so fierce was the volley poured in upon the brig, that she hauled down her colors and surrendered. When night closed in, and the captain and crew of the Petrel were rejoicing over their success, Gervayse Gault was absorbed in gloomy thought. His arm had been amputated just above the elbow, and, as he gazed at the bandaged stump, his gray eyes flashed fire.

"If I ever reach the shore, I will avenge my wrongs," he muttered, "though I wade through a sea of blood to do it. Had not Heathcote hired me to follow Crofton on his cruise, and make way with him, I should not be here with one arm!" And oaths which I dare not repeat, broke from his lips.

A fortnight subsequent to these stiring events, the Petrel dropped anchor in the Saugus river, and the booty and prisoners were delivered to the proper authorities. Under a strong guard of soldiers, the captives marched to headquarters, and thence to jail. As they passed through Lynn, the man whom Heathcote had paid for murdering Mabel Ward, perceived Gault, his companion in guilt, and swore he would rescue him, and kill Crofton at the earliest opportunity.

On reaching headquarters, the brave master of the Petrel was warmly welcomed by those connected with the naval department, and invited to dine that afternoon at the commander's mansion. At the appointed hour he was ushered into the drawing-room where the guests had assembled. There were gallant officers in military undress, old men with powdered perukes, linen ruffles, velvet coats and small clothes—a costume which I think has never been rivalled in elegance. Stately dames were grouped about, arrayed in the richest of satin and brocade, with nodding plumes and family jewels; and young ladies with the blooming beauty of Hebe, or the delicate loveliness of the Peris of Eastern song. Many noble guests were present, but all felt instinctively as Richard Crofton entered, that he was their peer. Bright eyes kindled, red lips smiled at his approach, old patricians clasped his hand, and warmly commended his brave deeds at sea, his self-sacrifice in taking nought from his country save a common sailor's pay. His attention was soon attracted to a lady who sat in a great easy-chair at a little distance; she wore a robe of black velvet, with jet ornaments, and her hair here and there dashed with silver, was gathered beneath a becoming coiffure of black lace. She looked like one who had suffered much, and there was something in her countenance which reminded Crofton of Grace. The next moment a girlish figure, clad in a half-mourning dress of the most delicate violet satin, and wearing pearls and amethysts amid her tresses, and on her neck and arms, turned towards him—it was Grace! In another instant he was at her side, and her smiles and blushes, as well as her earnest words, told how welcome he was.

"Richard," she murmured, after the greetings were over, "let me introduce you to my mother!"

"Your mother, Grace—I thought she was dead."

"She was dead to me for many years; but thank God the lost is found! It was she who haunted me in Lynn; I will explain all by-and-by! Come!"

She drew him forward with fond pride, and presented him to her mother. Madam Ward greeted him with the utmost cordiality, and was talking of his late prowess, in a manner that made his whole face light up, when dinner was announced, and the host appeared, to lead her to the dining-hall. Crofton gave his arm to Grace, and in a few moments they found themselves at a table, glittering with silver and porcelain, which had been brought from the fatherland to this new country. Madam Ward glanced at the Master of the Petrel, for she knew he was of humble birth, and could have had few opportunities of mingling with the best society. But neither she nor Grace had any reason to blush at his awkwardness, for the son of the Swampscot fisherman bore himself royally. When the ladies had retired to the drawing-room, the host rose and exclaimed:

"Gentlemen, I give you the health of the gallant master of the Petrel, like Chevalier Bayard, without fear, and without reproach. Let this toast be drank standing."

The guests sprang to their feet, drank the toast which had been proposed, in flowing bumpers of claret, and cheered till the old house rang.

As Richard Crofton re-entered the parlor, Grace joined him, and murmured, while her cheek flushed and her eyes beamed like stars:

"Those cheers were for you."

"I cannot deny it."

"Ah!" exclaimed Grace, "you are growing famous, but I love you no better than when you had no such claims to recommend you."

"Dear Grace," rejoined Crofton, "I hope I shall sometime make myself worthy of your love. Are you still staying at your uncle's?"

"O! no, we left there nearly a month ago. We live in Cambridge at the old Wetherell Place. We have an establishment of our own, and when you call, I will tell you what has passed since our parting. I must not monopolize you now, go and talk to that tall girl in crimson—she's loud in her praises of you."

Rather reluctantly the Master of the Petrel obeyed, and even when conversing with others, his gaze wandered to Grace. When the company began to disperse, it was ascertained that a chill rain was falling, and the host sent the ladies home in his carriage.

Richard Crofton yearned for a confidential talk with Grace, and he was about to leave, when the host called him back, and made some further inquiries relative to the prize-ships. As soon, however, as he could get away, the master of the Petrel set out for the home of Madam Ward. He had gone but a short distance, when a pistol ball came whizzing through the air, and struck his arm, lodging at last in his shoulder. He stopped a few moments, and peered into the gloom, but nought was to be seen or heard, and he hastened on. He raised the heavy iron knocker, shaped in a grotesque fashion, and let it fall with a violence, which would have awakened the seven sleepers. A black servant admitted him, and Grace bounded to meet him with all her former abandon. She led him into a great parlor, where her mother sat awaiting him, and as the light of the massive silver sconce flashed over him, it revealed his pallid countenance, the rent in his military coat, and the blood welling from the wound in his shoulder.

"O! Richard," moaned the girl, "you are pale as the dead—and—and—my God this is blood! Mamma, mamma, this is Heathcote's work!" and she staggered back, and would have fallen, had not Madam Ward caught her.

"Grace," replied the young man, "have no fears for me; it is nothing but a scratch I do assure you."

"But how did it happen?"

"A ball from an unseen source hit me, but I don't think it lodged in my shoulder."

Trembling in every limb, the girl moved forward.

"It must be more than a scratch," she gasped, "send for a surgeon, mamma!"

Captain Crofton protested, but he was overruled, and the doctor soon came. An examination revealed a pistol-ball, and ordering him to keep quiet, the surgeon left his patient to the care of Cassie and Grace.

The next day Grace told Richard Crofton her mother's history, and all that had occured at her uncle's, not omitting the threat of Ralph Heathcote. For a week the gallant Captain remained at the old Wetherell Place, and during his stay Madam Ward fully sanctioned his engagement to her child.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Villains, I know you both!"

"Is Mr. Ralph Heathcote boarding here?"

The speaker was, to all appearance, an old man, with shaggy, gray eyebrows, and hair whose silver threads were concealed by a profusion of powder, while his somewhat corpulent form bent low over a heavy gold-headed cane. As he spoke he moved to the bar of the Golden Fleece, and lifted his three-cornered hat with the grace of a polished gentleman.

"He is," replied Boniface.

"And is within?"

"I believe so."

"Then will you have the goodness to show me to his room?"

"Tim," exclaimed the landlord, addressing a boy who was playing dominoes in a corner, "show this stranger up to Mr. Heathcote's room."

The lad reluctantly rose, and shuffled along, followed by the old man.

"There, there; you can go now," cried the stranger, as they paused at Heathcote's door. He waited till the boy was out of sight, and then gave an imperative rap. The door was opened, and the young man rather sullenly asked:

"What's wanted?"

"I wish to see Mr. Heathcote—Ralph Heathcote of Westmoreland."

"I am the person you seek, sir. Will you walk in?"

The old man entered, and Heathcote closed the door and resumed:

"I think I have not the honor of your acquaintance, but perhaps you bring letters from my English friends."

"Ha! ha! ha!" laughed the visitor; "are you blind, Heathcote? Couldn't you see John Ross through any disguise?"

"John Ross!" echoed the young man, in astonishment.

"To be sure! 'Twas necessary I should come here to-night, and you understand why disguises must be often worn by you and your confederates. I dared not wear the black mask, and so I painted my face to counterfeit wrinkles, put on false hair, beard and eyebrows, and assumed the semblance of venerable age."

"Well, what's the news?" queried Heathcote. "I haven't eat nor slept since I heard that Crofton was safe and Gault imprisoned! I don't know what to do without Gault—he's my right-hand man!"

"Give yourself no farther uneasiness on that score—Gault is at liberty!"

"Bravo! bravo!" cried Heathcote; "but how did he escape?"

"Why, though he's lost one arm, he is still strong as a giant; but I helped him."

"Where is he?"

"Safe in the Lynn woods."

"Well, if Crofton were out of the way, I should feel relieved."

"I shot at him the night of the great banquet which was given in his honor, but, the deuce take him, he walked on as if I had not hit him."

"Ross, I shall challenge him!"

"Confound it, man, you must not—Gault says so—declares it would be madness!"

"I am an accomplished fencer—if we should fight with swords, I should kill him."

"Not by a long chalk! Gault fought hand to hand with him aboard the Petrel, and was no match for him."

"Then I could take pistols!"

"But he can shoot as well as the Tyrolese marksmen."

It was fearful to see the tempest of rage which passed over Heathcote. He paced the room with a maniac's fury—he uttered the wildest curses. And length he paused before his visitor, and muttered:

"John Ross, if you will rid me and the world of Richard Crofton within a week, you shall have five thousand pounds sterling!"

"I will! Give me your hand upon it!"

They clasped hands, and thus the guilty compact was sealed. Then, over a flask of wine, they discussed the horrid details of Mabel Ward's murder, and congratulated each other that the hunted felon had succeeded in eluding the vigilance of the officers. It was late when the old man left the room; but after Heathcote had turned the key of his door, the door of the adjoining apartment was cautiously opened, and the weird face of Moll Pitcher peered for a moment through the aperture. The next instant it was withdrawn, and the door closed.

"Ah!" she whispered, "Ralph Heathcote does not know who he has for neighbors to-night at the Golden Fleece. Are you satisfied, Robert Pitcher?" and she grasped her husband's arm, and gazed earnestly at him.

"Yes, Moll."

"And you—you officers of this colony, who thought me almost insane, when I hinted that Ralph Heathcote was an accomplice—what think you now?"

"We, too, must acknowledge that you were right and we wrong. Whether your knowledge was gained by a woman's instincts, or a witch's arts, we cannot say."

"'Tis not for you to know," replied the sibyl, with a toss of her head. "Come, Robert, come! 'Twill be midnight when we reach High Rock. But no matter! Gault must be found, and then—then let three black hearts be unmasked!"

With these words she and her husband left the apartment, and were soon afterward careering away toward Lynn.

"Moll," he at length asked, "do you feel no compunction at taking Heathcote's money, and yet working against him?"

"No!" and the weird woman chuckled to herself. "I might as well take the good of it as have him bribe villains to fiendish deeds with his gold!"

Robert Pitcher was silent, but not satified; and he scarcely spoke during the remainder of the journey.

It was midnight when the sibyl dismounted at her own home; but, late as it was, she saw a figure lurking in the shadows.

"I would speak with you—I must speak with you!" exclaimed a voice, hoarse with suppressed passion.

"Follow me, then!"

The next moment she stood in the kitchen, where she had just lighted a candle, and close by her a woman, royal in beauty, royal in grace, and yet with eyes that gleamed like a basilisk's, and a heart throbbing stormily under her gorgeous robe. It was Hortense L'Estrange!

"Madam!" she almost shrieked, "have you no power like the hags whom Macbeth met on the desolate heath? Can you not unloose the winds, make the waves boil, and sink the Petrel fathoms deep? Can you not send blight and mildew on Grace Ward's hopes?"

The weird woman hesitated a moment ere she replied.

"In six days you shall know my power—you and your confederacy."

"A thousand blessings on you!"

She placed a coin in Moll's hand, and hastened from the house. The sibyl stood at the open door with her candle, and watched her till the satin robe of changeful sheen, the India shawl, and the superb head, with its coronet of night-black hair, had disappeared, and then went back, a strange smile flickering over her saturnine face.

Late in the afternoon of the following day Ralph Heathcote was lounging in Captain Ward's drawing-room. The light which shone through the diamond-paned windows was mellowed and enriched by voluminous curtains of crimson brocade, and wherever his eyes turned, they fell on some beautiful or costly decoration; but his manner was dejected in the extreme. The old man was talking indignantly of Grace and her mother, when the door was flung wide open, and a band of officers swept into the room. Captain Ward recognized several of them as having been on the search for his daughter's murderer, and supposed they had important tidings to communicate. After greeting them with dignified courtesy, he asked—

"Can it be that you have found the criminal?"

"We think we have, sir."

"Where—where is he?" and Captain Ward sprang forward, his face flushed, and his whole frame tremulous with strong emotion.

"He is in jail, awaiting his trial."

"What is his name?" gasped Heathcote.

"John Ross—and we have also discovered two of his accomplices."

"Who are they—who are they?" demanded Captain Ward.

"Gervayse Gault——"

"What that very Gault"—interposed the old man—"whom we arrested once, and discharged. Aye! cousin Ralph, I never did feel quite satisfied as to his innocence, but you thought we ought to clear him!"

"And he had a good reason for such a course! Captain, you've been harboring the viper which stung you to your heart's core! We're here, Ralph Heathcote, to arrest you as the villain who bribed Ross to murder your cousin Mabel!"

The young man tried to brave it out, but his lips were sealed; his face grew ghastly as that of the dead woman, who had been found in the Pirate's Glen; cold sweat gathered on his brow; his eyes seemed glazing with horror.

"See, see, see," cried one of the officers; "does not his guilt write itself on every feature?"

Again he made a spasmodic effort to speak, but to no purpose. Captain Ward had heard this with rage and wonder; he rushed forward, and grasping the Sheriff's arm, drew him aside.

"The Gods!" he muttered, "I've had so much trouble of late, I believe it has unsettled my brain—is it true that you have arrested the son of Sir Ralph Heathcote, of Heathcote Hall, for being an accomplice in that horrid, horrid murder—or—or is't some illusion?"

"'Tis no dream, my poor old gentleman—for your sake, I wish it were."

"But what motive could he have?"

"Hark ye—your kinsman has been the tool, the associate of your deadliest foes. They brought him to this country five years ago, and pointed out to him your daughter Mabel, then in the bloom of her youth and beauty. They knew that if he introduced himself as your Westmoreland cousin, you would warmly welcome him, and perhaps give him Mabel's hand in marriage; but they thought it would crush your proud spirit to have her elope with a person unknown to you. They took care that a marriage should be solemnized as soon as they reached France, for they intended he should be able to produce a legal claim to your fortune in case of your death. From Paris they went to St. Petersburg, and there Gault, who had followed them, penned the cruel letter which gave you the first tidings with regard to your lost child. They afterward visited other cities of the Old World, and two children were born to them, one of whom died, when it was a year old, at Naples.

"Meanwhile poor Mabel's heart had been wrung by the disclosures of a gipsy girl, whose love Heathcote had won while sojourning in Spain, and who had vowed to avenge her wrongs. But her husband maintained a semblance of affection till they went to Naples. Then he grew cold and morose, and Zoe, the young gipsy, assured her that Heathcote had fallen desperately in love with the portrait of a fair American heiress. She resolved to watch and listen when he held mysterious conferences with strangers, and ascertained that the beautiful girl was her own cousin, Grace, and that he had determined to win her and her fortune at any cost. The wronged wife resolved to hasten home with her child, and warn Grace; but Heathcote discovering her intentions, bribed John Ross to murder her and the little Agnes! At the trial there will be still more startling revelations!"

A volley of curses broke from Heathcote, and rallying, he made one mighty effort to wrest himself from the grasp which had fastened upon him, but in vain.

"O, my God! my God! this is awful!" cried Captain Ward. "Off with him to jail! No, no, don't wait for judge or jury. Let the people in the streets hear what I've heard, and they'll tear him limb from limb!" Then stalking across the room, he paused before Heathcote, and shook his clenched hand fiercely in his livid face.

"Fiend!" he thundered, trembling all over with passion, "you have beggared my daughter's life, bribed another demon to murder her and her child, and almost driven me mad with shame and sorrow! Go, go—out of my sight, and take with you an old man's curse!"

Heathcote cowered under the majesty of his kinsman's indignation, but he dared not speak; the next moment heavy manacles were forced upon his wrists and ankles, and he was borne away to jail.

Captain Ward was raving like a maniac, when a low voice said:

"Well, did I not tell you at Lynn that murder would out—that you might yet find the hunted felon beneath your own roof?" and Moll Pitcher moved into the grand drawing-room.

"Yes, yes," exclaimed the old man, turning toward her. "O, Moll, Moll, did you suspect him then?"

"Aye, that I did, as you will hear at court. Hark ye, Captain Ward: they say Mabel's ghost haunts her old chamber in Boston; I wish the phantom would testify at the trial!"

A long conversation ensued, and it was night when the sibyl left the mansion.

[TO BE CONTINUED IN OUR NEXT.]

THE OPAL BRACELET.

BY A CHILD OF THE ORIENT.

I have never known who I am, nor whence I came. My first remembrance is of a long, wearisome, stormy sea voyage, during which I suffered much from illness and neglect, and cried many hours, in my berth alone, for some one whom I loved to come to me. Who this person was, or whether there were more than one, I have long since forgotten, and I think, even then, my memories of them were very indistinct; and, after all, my desires might have been more a child's passionate longing for love and care, than for the presence of any individual.

I was even then with the very persons—Madame Marie and her husband—under whose charge I grew up to womanhood. They never claimed to be my parents, or to bear any other relationship of kindred blood to me. They lavished money on me, and gave me priceless jewels which they said belonged to my family.

Having these things, as a matter of course, I naturally set little value upon them. Among my jewels was only one which awakened either pride or interest in me, and that was a bracelet, or rather armlet of some barbaric fashion, a heavy circlet of yellow gold, out of which gleamed an opal of the largest size, and rarest lustre.

I question if another stone like this exists, and I feel almost sure that scarcely, save in that weird land of mystery, the East, exists another with such magic powers as mine.

From my youth I had loved to watch the changing tints of my opal, and above all had been awed and charmed by it on the one or two rare occasions when it assumed the appearance I am about to describe. It was in questioning Madame Marie in relation to this that I heard from her lips the first and only allusion to my parents that ever passed them.

I was amusing myself, one day in my room, as was my wont, by decorating my person in gorgeous robes and jewels. Madame Marie had a collection of costumes of all manner of strange peoples, to which she sometimes allowed me access, as a means of diversion. I sought these, this day, and dressed myself in the yellow satin robes and flowing trousers of a Turkish Sultana. To complete the dress, I sought the opal bracelet, which was quite large enough to clasp my arm near the shoulder, just where the wide sleeve fell backward with its graceful sweep.

As I lifted it from its casket I saw that a marvellous change had passed over the gem. Its pale, translucent gleam, green, tinged with violet, had quite faded away. A dull gray shadow lay upon its outer surface, while deep down in its very centre glowed an eye. As distinctly as I behold now the blue eyes of my little one playing beside me, I saw this lurid orb shoot forth gleams of wrath, and horror, mingled, as it seemed to my excited imagination, with ferocious hate.

As I looked, the expression changed, wrath and terror faded away, and in their place came an expression of such fiendish, such malignant triumph as I have never seen, nor hope to see, in any human eye. Terror stricken, I screamed aloud, and Madame Marie, who was sitting in the next room, hurried in, followed by her husband, and a little old man whom they called Zophar.

I had thrown down the bracelet, and in my gorgeous robes was cowering in a corner among the cushions which I had arranged for the Sultana's couch.

"What is the matter, Ann?" asked Madame Marie, advancing quickly toward me.

I pointed to the bracelet, but put up both my hands warningly, lest she should bring it to me. She snatched it from the ground, and turned to her husband, while Old Zophar fell into an attitude, exclaiming in his broken and mixed dialect:

"Quelle posè! Vat centeuritee of de expression! Mon dieu! Gott in Himmel! Vere is my papier? Vere is mon pincau? Allons! Quoi douc! I go to make my lettle princesse vat you call immortelle!"

He rushed from the room, and I heard Madame Marie say to her husband:

"There is nothing here, but she has seen the eye," and he, with a loud laugh, and a sneer directed at me, turned away.

"You are not to be frightened, child," Madame Marie then said, turning to me. "The thing can't hurt you, and it's a sort of talisman, I believe, or something of that sort. At any rate, your mother charged me never to allow you to part from it, and she showed me once the eye in the opal that always warns one of your race of danger, or change to any other member of the race, or to one who is beloved. I tell you now, since you have found out the secret, that you are never to part with the gem, though, of course, if you please you may lock it in its casket, and not look upon it again for years."

"But, Madame Marie, tell me, you have never told me, what is my race? who was my mother? what, and who am I?"

"Child, be quiet! How often have I told you that you are not to know more than that you belong to us? Be quiet, or I shall regret that, to drive away your fears, I have told you so much."

She turned from me, and left me to struggle alone with the bewildering, vague memories, and the wild longings of my childish heart. My mother! Who or where was she? What was a mother's love, what a child's happiness?

Lovingly, almost reverently, I took up the opal. It was the only bond that united my barren, dissevered life with that of my unknown mother. The lurid eye had disappeared, the gray warning tint was gone. It beamed upon me, pearl-like in its fathomless, translucent light, as I pressed it wildly to my lips and heart. I drew the bracelet upon my arm, and from that hour I did not lay it aside for many long months. I watched the opal day and night. My health, life, comfort came to hang upon its changes. If it grew dull, I pined and faded. If the eye gleamed forth in terror, hate or warning, I shrank and moaned as one in pain, and seemed to feel, in my own person, whatever danger, pain or injury the unknown member of my unknown race sustained.

Madame Marie saw this, and vainly strove to remove it from my sight. For long I resisted, until she stole it from me in my sleep, and locking it in its casket, hid the key among her own effects.

I pined for the opal a few days, but Madame Marie was coldly obdurate; soon healthier interests absorbed my mind, and I began to recover the strength I had lost.

About this period we removed to a busy city street. Our life changed somewhat. I sometimes went out with Madame Marie, closely veiled, and saw the brilliant shops, and various harmless sights of the city, and I sat by my window, and saw the busy, surging life that flowed through our noisy street. New thoughts, strange ideas began to quicken in my brain. My intellect received a powerful stimulus, and the opal and its mysterious changes was forgotten. And meanwhile, with my whole soul going out through my eyes, I knew not that I was myself seen.

Hubert, looking from his opposite window, saw me as I gazed; my quaint and gorgeous dress attracted his regards, and my childish curiosity and interest in the veriest common-place of life, and then he noticed my unusual foreign form of feature, and the complexion, with its rich, warm tints, so different from that of American girls. Curiosity deepened into interest, and I think he loved me long before that night when he saved me from that fearful man who, eluding Monsieur Henri's vigilance, sought my chamber, and would have borne me away, I know not where. No matter how, at this present writing, but he rescued me, and restored me to my guardians' care, receiving, for this kindest act, only a severe intimation that his attentions would be deemed impertinent interference, and that it was hoped he would not again enter their doors.

* * * * * * *

Once again the opal warned me of Hubert's danger. The bold, bad man dogged his footsteps, and would have slain him. But out of the depths of my slumber a cry of pain and terror awoke me. The opal gleamed near me in the gas-light—I raised it, and saw the warning eye in its depths—knew the *beloved* was now in danger—and springing wildly from my couch, rushed forth to save him. Instinctively I sought and found him. The assassin stood with poised weapon above him when I glided between. My cry of terror awoke the sleeper, and he was saved.

* * * * * * *

I only consult it now when Hubert leaves me on those short absences that business sometimes makes necessary. It pales and brightens as he is sad or happy, but the warning eye has but once told me of danger. And then, in God's good providence, he escaped unhurt.

* * * * * * *

Monsieur Henri and Madame Marie disappeared from the city when I became Hubert's wife, after one vain effort to recover the custody of my person. With them disappeared all possibility of developing the mystery that has encircled all my life. But it became known that they were the acknowledged leaders of a band of desperadoes, and Hubert always believes that they were employed, perhaps by some of the mighty ones of earth, to seclude me forever from all knowledge of a station that might have been so exalted as to tempt some weak mortal to the fearful crime of ridding himself thus of the only obstacle to power, or place, or riches. I know not, and I have long since ceased to care, content in my happy lot of wife and mother—best, holiest, happiest of all.

SOME persons have so great an aversion to pretension or affectation, that they are apt to neglect polish in their abhorrence of varnish.

JUDGE NOT IN HASTE.

Ne'er be hasty in your judgment—
  Never foremost to extend
Evil mention of a neighbor,
  Or of one you've call'd a friend!
Of *two* reasons for an action
  Choose the better, not the worst;
Oft—with some—the meaner motive
  Ever strikes the fancy first!
Then be gentle with misfortune;
  Never foremost to extend
Evil mention of a neighbor,
  Or of one you've call'd a friend!

Judge not with detracting spirit,
  Speak not with disdainful tongue;
Nor, with hard and hasty feeling,
  Do one human creature wrong!
Words there are that, sharp as Winter,
  Strip the little left to cheer;—
Oh, be yours the kinder mission,
  Prone to soothe, not cause, a tear!
Then be gentle with misfortune;
  Never foremost to extend
Evil mention of a neighbor,
  Or of one you've call'd a friend!

THE ONE ERROR.

A STORY FOR YOUNG WIVES.

CHAPTER XX.

A YOUTHFUL CHAMPION.

For a few minutes after the disappearance of the uncompromising landlady, the utmost confusion reigned in the little room, which had so lately been the scene of such peaceful and neighborly hospitality.

The old man, alarmed by the confusion, and the harsh ejectment to which he had himself been subject, by his incoherent exclamations added to the hubbub; and the child, half frightened and grieved to her little heart at the distress of one who had already won her affection, did not cease to lament; while Nelly was intent upon restoring the poor girl to calmness.

Agnes at length grew calmer, though she shed tears plentifully, and bowing her head upon the arm of the chair where her father sat, she seemed rather to avoid than court the kindly attention of her friend.

But it was only for a short time; raising her head, she looked upon Nelly, with tearful eyes she strove to dry, and in a voice that she in vain essayed to render firm, she said:

"Thank you, dear Mrs. Franklen, but I won't set them against you for me; people are so hard, oh! so hard. See how I've strove and strove:" her voice rose, and her face flushed as she spoke. "For these ten months past I have worked hard, and lived an honest life, God knows I have! What I've put up with, how I've lived and starved, and been tempted, too——" she burst into tears afresh, and impetuously dashed them away a moment after, as she cried: "They won't let *one* be right—they won't give us a chance; oh, it is very hard!"

The touch of little Ida's cheek upon her hand soothed her again, and after a few moments of weeping, she said, despondingly:

"We must go at once, but *where* I'm sure I cannot tell; she will give us no good word, and so late, too."

Nelly, in whom even her own ill-fortune had hardly power to banish wholly the prejudices of her sex, though in her heart warming to the poor forlorn creature before her, still held somewhat aloof; but at the sound of that despairing voice, and further still moved by the staunch adhesion of her own child to their new-found friend, she suffered her own kind nature to have way, and, again approaching Agnes, she said:

"Could you make shift to do with us for a bit, just till you can find a place?"

The young woman looked at her, as if doubting whether she heard aright. It was, alas! so wholly strange to find one of her own sex offering succor, or tendering pity.

"*Do*," urged Nelly, for tenderness begets more so rapidly in the heart that encourages it—"do, and I'll help make you as comfortable as I can; you know what it is, and of course we couldn't all stay there together, for any time; but just till you look about a bit; come, now, let us set about arranging it at once."

Agnes Chaunce took the hand of the other, and pressed it earnestly to her lips.

"Thank you, thank you, bless you, for your kind offer, but it may get you into ill-will with the people at your place. *She* is set against me down stairs, I can see, and they can be so spiteful. I wish I'd told you, Mrs. Franklen, I wish I had; you'll may be sorry you have served me when you know——"

"Never mind, never mind," interrupted N[illegible], and the words of good Dame Tibbetts just then recurred to her mind: "you're in trouble, and that's enough, and you've been very kind to us—now, will you come?"

"I don't know what else we can do," said Agnes, looking appealingly at her father, who, much discomposed at her distress, was making many futile attempts at consolation; "so, if you really will be so good as to be troubled with us, just for the night, we will come, and thank you." She added, sadly: "It won't take me long to pack up all I have."

So it was settled Nelly should return home, to make such preparations as might be for her unexpected guests, and Ida, having been prevailed upon, solely with the assurance of her new friend rejoining her shortly, and having seen her tears dried, departed with her mother; leaving Agnes to make her arrangements with all haste for obeying the unceremonious warning she had received, in which she received a new impetus by a second visit from Mrs. Grejons, with an admonition that she "wanted the room," and a hope, indignantly expressed, that she "did not expect her to be reference for her."

"No," Agnes meekly answered. She did not say where she was going, nor did she offer any retort to the hard landlady's asperity, though once her large eyes flashed, and her cheek glowed, and there was an expression on her face as if she could have been, upon occasion, a very different person to the quiet Agnes Mrs. Grejons so easily trampled on. But her few household belongings were soon packed, and a very vigorous disposition was displayed by the poor old man, when he saw the bed, on which he was just counting to repose himself, bundled into a heap and tied up, a shapeless mass, to be deposited on the truck at the door, and which—at least, its proprietor—Mrs. Grejons, with a cruel refinement of malice, was hurrying to get done, and be off "with them unsightly rattletraps from before her door."

There was a little delay, consequent upon getting the geraniums in their tin canisters in from the parapet, the board having been previously removed, and the man of the truck had to go up stairs to reach them.

Pending this, and when all the chattels were piled upon the truck, and the old man, trembling and muttering, had just accomplished the descent of those stairs which would never annoy him any more, in rushed Tom, at more than his usual random speed, more plentifully bespattered with printer's ink than was ever his wont, and suddenly brought to a standstill by the unexpected symtoms of removal that met his eye as he entered.

"*You* going away!" he exclaimed, bluntly, as he came to a sudden halt in front of Agnes, who stood by her father's side, with her basket in her hand, and ready equipped for starting.

Agnes answered in the affirmative.

"What for?" said the impetuous boy; "my mother been in her tantrums? and I was a-going to show him my birds and all; what a shame!"

"Oh, don't mind, thank you," expostulated Agnes; "I'm glad, though, I've seen you, because you've done me many a kindness, and I wanted to thank you."

"Bother!" interrupted Tom, his face reddening, and indignation getting the better of a certain shyness which would else have been too much for him on such an occasion; "but, I say, where are you going all of a sudden? You was friends enough when I left—you and mother, and you must have fell out since; what is it?"

"Never mind, Tom," said Agnes; "there's no falling out, only Mrs. Grejons gave us warning; don't you mind, I am going to a friend's."

"Tom! you, Tom!" screamed the voice of Mrs. Grejons at this juncture; "come along here, I want you!"

No answer from Tom, but he looked at the loaded truck, on which the man was endeavoring, in vain, to find room for the flowers in their cumbersome receptacles.

"Look here!"—Tom's favorite adjuration—"I shall carry something for you; you're loaded."

"Oh, no, indeed!" Agnes began.

"But I will, else I'll lead the old man, else I'll shove the truck; I will help!"

"But pray, Tom, you know Mrs. Grejons won't like it."

"Tom! *are* you coming to your tea this moment?" called Mrs. Grejons from the foot of the stairs; at the last she did not feel, perhaps, wholly equal to facing the foe she had so uncompromisingly routed.

Tom flew down the kitchen stairs at two bounds.

"Look here, mother, what's Miss Chaunce a-going away all in a hurry for, and what's she been crying about?"

"Never you mind—how should I know what *she's* been crying for? do her good, I dare say; she had need. Now where are you off to?"

Tom had meanwhile washed his face and hands, and assumed his cap, with every sign of discarding his long-suffering tea.

"I'm a-going to help 'em move," said Tom, taking care to possess himself of the door beforehand.

"*You dare!*"

"I like moving, and I don't want no tea," said Tom; and he was already at the top of the stairs.

The truck was already out of sight, but the tardy steps of the old man delayed the pair, and the boy caught sight of Agnes's dress as it fluttered round the corner.

Quick as thought Tom darted across the Close, dived into an alley which intersected the very street the truck had entered, and so met the little party face to face, with triumphant exultation.

Agnes began a remonstrance, but she might as well have spared herself the trouble.

Tom had a ready ally in the young man who drew the truck, and who was not indisposed to having his burthen lessened. So with a mutual grin, the one resigned, the other took possession of the flowers in their tin canisters, and a box which Tom insisted would be much safer with him than on the truck; he would have added to his load the basket Agnes carried, but she not at all rejoicing in Tom's act of insubordination, refused.

"You aint angry with me?" Tom said, at last, as they journeyed slowly along Holborn, and she had yielded to her father's caprice, that Tom should lead him. "I shan't do any harm coming, shall I?"

"Oh, no, I am not angry," Agnes replied, promptly, "it's very kind of you; only you see Mrs. Grejons is set against me, and I don't care for her to know where I am gone; besides, she may be angry with you."

"Oh, *that's* no odds," said the scapegrace, very undutifully; "and if that's all, you catch me telling anybody anything! so it's all right."

A load was taken off Tom's mind, it was evident.

He thenceforward became a very host in himself, showed them the shortest cut to Tyndall's Buildings, unloaded the truck, carried in the chairs and the etc., of Agnes's household goods, and deposited them in the passage, whence Nelly and Agnes quickly transferred them to the now over-crowded little back parlor.

Ida had run forward to welcome her poor friend; encountering Tom in the passage, she and the bright-eyed boy exchanged mutual glances of questioning wonder.

Finally Tom made over the flowering shrubs to the custody of their mistress, and she, with many thanks, took leave of her unexpected and hearty champion.

"Look here," said traitor Tom, who had quite mastered his shyness, "I think I know where's a place you'll be quite as comfortable as mother's, and cheaper, too; may I come and tell you?"

Agnes hesitated.

"Look here, you never fear I'll tell her, and you'll let me come? yes, good-night."

Away ran the light-hearted boy, glorying, he hardly knew why, in his little feat of bravado and good-nature.

"And how dare you to go near them people, or to help 'em? you good-for-nothing—see if I don't get you bound to Thatcher this very week," was the salutation which greeted Tom on his return.

"What have they done? you was all friends right enough to-day, mother."

"She's a shameful bad one! a good-for-nothing, barefaced hussy!"

"Oh, come, then, I don't believe it," blurted impetuous Tom. "Look here, how *can* she be bad when she takes such care of the poor old man, and works, ah! like anything? I don't believe it."

"Don't tell me, sir," exclaimed the irascible Mrs. Grejons; "if you dare take her part, or speak so much as one word to them, I'll—I don't know what I won't do."

"Look here, mother," said Tom, imperturbably, "I can sleep in that there empty room, now, and then I shall be sure to wake in good time."

"*Wake*, indeed! much good you'll do when you are awake. There, get along with you at once—that's all the supper you'll get, I can tell you."

Tom gave a defiant look at the cold potatoes which were destined for his penitential meal; but as his pocket was rarely without an ample supply of gingerbread and captain's biscuit, it is probable he did not suffer materially by his rejection of them.

He took a very amicable leave of his mother before retiring for the night; in fact, Tom was one of those with whom it is simply impossible to remain very long at variance. The cup might just as well refuse to be sweetened by the lump of sugar that is dropped into its contents.

CHAPTER XXI.

SISTERS IN SORROW.

There are no friends to the poor in distress like the poor themselves. As far as the actual gifts of money and necessaries go, of course the assertion cannot hold good; but in the contriving, the planning, the sympathy where it is wanted, and the relief exactly where and in the manner most required, there is nothing can come up to the fellow-feeling that makes not only the will, but the power to alleviate, by reason of thorough acquaintance with the disease.

It would have been difficult to find any one less possessed with the means of affording the accommodation she had that night to the guests so suddenly thrown upon her, than Nelly, and equally difficult would it be to discover any more willing and alert than she proved herself, in making the most of the little in her power.

For though, at the moment, the denunciations of the virago had alarmed all Nelly's virtue—the virtue of a country-bred woman, be it understood—she had too lately suffered and been herself misjudged, to bear, unmoved, the sight of grief; and once stirred to kindliness, she threw herself into the work with vigor, and if she did, now and again, recall the terrible words of the landlady, it was with the hope that the young girl, in whose favor she was so much impressed, would be able to explain away the worst of what she had heard.

She was not kept long in suspense.

In the scanty accommodation of the room at Tyndall's Buildings, it was not possible that all could sleep that night, and Agnes could by no means be induced to take the repose her hostess would deny herself.

Little Ida and the old man—quite as much the child—were already fast asleep; and the two women agreed, with little difficulty, to keep their watch by the fire together. This new affliction gave her acquaintance a fresh interest in Nelly's eyes, and Agnes, on her part, felt she owed it to her kind hostess to keep her no longer in ignorance of her own history.

It was not much to tell, though the little was bitter enough in the recital.

The listener gathered more from Agnes's silence than her words, that the father of the latter had filled but poorly the part of a parent to her. Her mother died when she was quite a child, and her father had married soon after an idle, disreputable, and disorderly slattern, who, though she contrived to keep in with her husband by ministering to his vices, led all depending on her a sad life, and to the poor child became a very tyrant, the more that her own children died, one after the other, when young.

Years passed on as the girl grew up, her father heeding her no more than if she was a servant in the house—her days more and more painful and lonely. It was little to be wondered at that, anxious to escape a life so wearisome, she hearkened to the fair words of a young man who occasionally came to her father's on matters connected with his trade. Agnes was affectionate by nature, and had found no outlet for her feelings; she was gentle, and easily persuaded by those in whom she felt an interest; she missed the tenderness of home, and eagerly accepted that which so fairly promised its perfection.

It was the old story; she loved the man, she judged his heart after her own, and dreamed not of deceit—trusted as she felt she herself could be trusted—consented to a secret marriage, which she thought was valid, but which was only a sham—and was lost.

She had feared to take her secret to her harsh relatives, for she knew that her services were too valuable to her step-mother to be easily given up, and her father had no will but his wife's. But how much worse when days passed and the husband came not! It would have been easier to tell the first than that which would now constitute the tale. There was nothing but shame and horror left her to face; she heard nothing from her husband, even whether he had quitted her intentionally was unknown to her.

The time passed and the horror grew upon her; she had no longer even the alternative of concealment—to die of broken hope and ruined affections was not even to be permitted her.

She fled in the night from her father's house to London, for there it was *he* lived, she knew.

She found him—at least his residence; she asked news of him. He was two months the husband of a woman, rich, and half as old again as himself.

That was the wakening from her short dream; she learned the truth, and women who have loved, I need not tell you what she did. To you who have not, I may assure that she did *not* vow vengeance on him, nor make notorious, even as it deserved, his sin, by blazoning her shame. God help her! she never could herself tell what passed after that hour, till she found herself in the blessed refuge where her babe was born, and baptised in its mother's tears, poor fool! after *his* name.

Much care, and tenderness, and aid she found there; she and the child grew strong, and the day came when she must turn, once more, into the cold world, with this helpless burthen looking to her for life, who was so weak and shiftless, even for herself; and yet she clasped the frail thing to her, as if it might have been the pledge of her safety and welfare, instead of being—heaven help us in this Christian country!—the badge of her shame, the weight that was to sink her down, down in the social scales, till the lowest only should be left her refuge.

The good women at the hospital had subscribed a small sum for her at parting, and with this she paid for the care of her child, while she went seeking work. She was young and strong, and healthy-looking; and many a stirring housewife would have jumped at such a servant; but, poor simpleton! she told the truth, and ruined her chance; even went so far as to ask one motherly woman, who had all but engaged her, might she see her baby, if it was brought to her, now and then? Mercy! the good woman was horrified, and blessed her stars as she started aloof from the contamination of the young creature that could so unblushingly declare herself—a mother! But the poor soul clung to the only thing she had to love with a tenacity that outweighed the love of life.

"I never felt quite miserable," she said to Nelly, "while it was with me, and when I had fed and warmed it; and the pretty dear would smile up in my face; it was so nice to think I could make something happy, wretched outcast as I was!"

She went on to say, how she soon learned it would be useless trying to get work at any house, or without parting with her infant—she could not do that! So she took at last to the dreary resource of the desolate—the needle. And on its miserable fruits she starved for months, from her poor resources feeding two.

Then work failed, and she had to seek it anew. There was a pause here, the pale cheek flushed, and her eyes were cast down.

In a broken voice the girl went on:

"I earned but fourteen pence a week, for a month, and the rent of my share of a miserable room was eightpence out of it."

She broke out crying, and for a time even the consolatory words of her companion had not power to soothe her.

Then she went on to tell how her child pined and died, as she persisted in believing, as a punishment for her error, sorely repented as it had been; how she had herself lain sick to death for months, and would then have entered an asylum that was offered to her, but that she had accidentally learned that her bad stepmother had deserted her father, having robbed him of everything she could lay hands on; and that the old man, stricken with infirmity of mind and body, had been some time past the inmate of a workhouse.

From a few charitable persons whom she had interested in her case she obtained sufficient money to fetch her father to London, where she found promise of a better market for her talents than had before been obtained; and, up to the present time, she had supported him and herself by the work of her hands, and borne unrepiningly with the wayward selfishness of the parent to whom she had owed so little.

This latter Nelly guessed at for herself; no word of Agnes would betray that there was aught but pleasure in the duty she performed so conscientiously. She asked the latter if she knew at all who it was had been instrumental in rousing the implacable landlady against her; but Agnes could only conjecture respecting a woman to whom she had given offence by refusing to part with her treasured baby-things, which she, poor creature, had preserved through all.

"I knew she was set against me," said Agnes Chaunce, "but I did not think she would have carried it so far. I met her one day not long since, close here, and I expect she made it her business to do me an ill turn. Well, I don't want to say evil of any one, but, if all be true, it would be better for her that she didn't bear the name of an honest man. It does seem awful to me that a woman can make light in any way of being a wife; of having, as you may say, a man's life in her keeping."

They were both silent, the women looking into the embers of the fading fire. Those words of Agnes's had, unknown to the speaker, stirred anxious feelings in the other's breast—her early wifehood and its blest privileges, how she had abused them, how coquetted with her happiness; and in the weary labyrinth she was now pursuing she, too, was tracked by the shadows of her *one error!*

CHAPTER XXII.

A REBEL AND AN APPARITION.

"Don't ask *me* where he is; he's an owdacious young scamp! *I* never know where he is half his time, nor a quarter—he'll find his way home when he wants his victuals, I know that. Drat the boys, I say; they're more bother than they're worth, that's all I know; what with wear and tear, and worry, more than a dozen girls, one of 'em."

It was Mrs. Grejons who delivered herself after this fashion up the grating of her laundry—the back area—to a neighbor's lad who had inquired for "her Tom," the general anathema of the sex being intended for the benefit of the said juvenile, who was apostrophized on his disappearance, as an "imperent jackanapes," of whose company she was glad her Tom had been quit.

The fact was, the scolding mother, with all her seeming harshness, spoiled her son; she threatened, it is true, but never carried into effect one of her threats.

All the scarecrows she hung out had grown familiar, and the young invader laughed at them accordingly.

At bottom, there is no doubt, Mrs. Grejons believed her boy the genius and the hero every mother's only son is bound to be, and would have missed the chance of a scold as the ass his thistle, or the epicure the cayenne which brings the tears into his eyes.

"Where he got it from, I don't know;" she would say to the gossip who was constantly to be found at her elbow during any of the culinary or domestic operations of the day. "Not from me, nor his father, I'm certain—as gentle and as quiet a man, was my Grejons, as ever stepped. And believe me, that boy won't even take to his father's business natural as a boy should—as clean and gentlemanly a trade as ever was—why, he never need to soil his fingers, my Grejons hadn't—quite the gentleman he was—court hairdresser, you see, he was, ma'am!"

A certain court in Lambeth, where the pole of the departed barber had been well known, was thus delicately alluded to by the widow.

"Poor dear! he went off sudden—inflammation, ma'am." Whether of the tympanum or the cerebral organs, Mrs. Grejons did not say. Overdoses of stimulants, whether of alcohol or the feminine tongue, will go far to produce either.

"I was left with that there boy on my hands, and a heavy burden it was; but the back was fitted, I'm thankful to say, and I've strove on; and Tom's not so bad as some I could say; but he's that obstinate and contrary—no less than three trades, ma'am, have he tried, and Mr. Hattler, as would take him without a premium; but he's that set again the business, he won't so much as go anigh the place to get his hair cut, leastways, unless I drive him before me; and of all the world, his heart's set upon nothing but this beastly printing business, as makes his things filthy to *that degree*——" and the vigorous plying of the landlady's elbows at her wash-tub, pointed the sentence most appropriately.

Yet when Tom's whistle was heard, giving warning of his presence in the Close somewhere, the sour-visaged landlady, stroking the suds from her arms, and stamping her feet as she released them from her pattens, would hasten to withdraw from the oven the sausage or baked meat pie, and the bit of herring, which, with the discretionary pile of bread and butter, awaited the young printer.

Then back to her tub again, whence Tom was hailed with an exhortation to see that he wiped his *feet*—a threat to box his ears, in reply to the inquiry if he was to "take off his boots and stockings, then?"—and a conjecture that he'd find all his tea as cold as stone—as if she had not taken the precaution to pour his tea into another mug lest the reprobate might *burn* his mouth.

Tom knew it, too; and though he did run rampant at times through many of his mother's prejudices, was not behind in his share of duties.

But there was something extraordinarily punctilious of them this especial August evening of which I write, and which finds us some months advanced from our last chapter.

He filled up the copper, brought in the wood, supplied the coal-box, nay, even performed, without the usual dumb show of contumely, the one repugnant office of blacking the first floor's boots.

"I don't so much mind the woman's," Tom would say, "but the man's, *ugh!*" and then a pantomimic sparring match would be performed between the patent leathers, and the fists, black with printing-ink, which invariably ended in the "polishing off" of the former.

But to-night so assiduous was Tom in his work, that even "the curly-headed ploughboy" only in fitful starts kept company to the brushes, which were next vigorously exercised upon himself, to a considerable improvement of his appearance. He performed the other essentials of his toilette; then, coming up to his mother's side, slid his arm round her waist, and looked up in her face: "Mother, I've got another order; will you go?"

"*Me* go? with this pile of shirts not seconded, and that hill of socks? I don't know what muck you've been a-staining this collar with; I've scrubbed the skin off my knuckles, and the plague a bit will it stir."

"It's the new ink we're using; likely the patent. But, mother, I'm a-going then."

"Drat your patents, I say. I wish you didn't get so many orders; you've been I don't know how many times this month."

"But I haven't seen 'Paul Pry.'"

"Now don't you go staying for the second piece, mind, or as sure as my name—what's this, sir? Your best jacket, to go to the play indeed!"

"The other's so bad," pleaded Tom.

"You go this minute and change it. How dare you?" But all the time she was stroking the suds off, and *he* knew it was to set his collar right behind; and in ten minutes Tom was on his way to the play in his new jacket, in high glee, which not the parting and final resolution that he *should* be 'prenticed before that month was out could in the least deteriorate.

It was a grand epoch in the boy's life. *He* had been to the play time and oft; orders were common at the house where he worked, and where the play-bills were done, and Tom went, I am bound to say, oftener than was good for him; but the glory of it was, that to-night he was to rival all his compeers of the alley, was to make his first appearance in public as a *galant homme*—in fact, was to take a lady to the play.

In the course of many subsequent visits to the new lodging, the acquaintance had been improved between Tom and his mother's old lodgers. A certain fine-toned canary had found its way thither, for the especial delectation of the old man, who had been duly instructed in all bird-fancying mysteries. It was wonderful how fond the poor invalid imbecile grew of the boy, though the presence of any other young person or child irritated him; and Agnes was often truly thankful for the relief this companionship for her father gave her to attend to her duties.

Then there were odd jobs of carpentering to do—mending a chair, putting up a curtain—and father and daughter were so very poor that even Tom's humble resources were available; and who so attractive as those who enhance our own importance?

At first a whim—partly, I fear, of opposition to his mother, partly arising from some boy gossip respecting their pale lodger, and more from the interest displayed in his birds—had attracted Tom to his new acquaintance; but he would, I expect, have found it very difficult to explain the feelings which were flushing his cheeks and impelling his feet to such haste, on his road to Clerkenwell that evening.

Perhaps it was the notion of what a treat it would be to the pale, sad, quiet girl—who, whatever Jem Honess might say, *was* pretty—for her to go to the theatre, and be made laugh, and eat oranges—and how good it would be to hear her say she had enjoyed herself, and through him.

Tom must have conquered his bashfulness pretty considerably to have got so far, but he had not summoned the necessary courage to apprise his friend of his intention. He trusted to the moment as most favorable, and offering least occasion for refusal.

Alas! for such reckoning.

With a smile that had a more decided negative than even a frown, a sad smile, Agnes shook her head, and, thanking him, declined.

She could not leave her father, she said, and besides, as hindering any proposal he might offer, she had done with such things forever. She used to go *once*—it was not so new as Tom had supposed to her, but she should never go again; it would be no pleasure, and again she thanked him.

The boy's countenance fell.

"But," said Agnes, "if you are going, I should be very glad if you would take some one else, that I think would enjoy it; I'm sure the child would.

"It's a person lives in the room over this. She has been very kind to me, and the little girl is a dear little creature; she mopes so, poor thing, and has no amusement. If you would——"

Tom did not see it; he would rather stay and talk to the old man.

"My father has not been so well," Agnes said, "and I am going to take him to the doctor to-night. Indeed, you would do me a favor quite, if you would let Mrs. Franklen go instead of me, and dear little Ida."

Finally, it was settled. Nelly suffered herself to be persuaded for the sake of her child, who, indeed, stood much in need of some excitement and change; so Tom prepared himself to do the agreeable in a different manner from that he had anticipated. But, as we often unknowingly reject our greatest pleasures, Tom found in that thus forced upon him a delight he had little expected.

It was by no means to the most select retreat of the drama that Tom had led his party; but there was a 'Paul Pry' of no ordinary merit, and, besides, a piece full of sentiment and *danseuses*, and a few good songs.

Quickly the lad found his attention divided between the stage and the hitherto quiet, large-eyed child at his side, and finally absorbed in the contemplation of her delight.

It was unbounded. The great dark eyes dilated; the little hands were clasped and unclasped convulsively; she leaned forward, as if she would spring into the midst of the orchestra; and, as the last notes of the singer died away, she drew a long breath of deep satisfaction and delight, while her eyes followed the actress with an expression of such unfeigned admiration and reverence as would have surely done that lady good to have seen.

In the comic piece there was less enthusiasm, but enough childish delight to make Tom relinquish his last regret that his first offer had been declined, and when, in the interval of an act, the little girl turned round, and after studying his unconscious face, as was her wont, for some minutes, said, laying her hand caressingly on his cheek, "*Dearly* good *you* are," the boy nature thrilled again.

The act was so full of a spontaneous gladness of a heart that overflowed with gratitude to the originator of its *first* delight.

He barely heard Nelly's more measured words of thanks. It had done her good to see the pleasure of her child—mothers know how much.

Tom's hand went to his pocket, and confused visions of dissipation in the shape of oysters, I am afraid, floated across his mind's eye.

But a second time Fate intervened between his project and their accomplishments.

The little party had left the theatre, Tom had tightly hold of the little girl's hand, her mother by the other side, which she always took; they had passed the entrance crush of the crowd and were slowly passing out of its skirts. Ida had just pressed her mother for the explanation of something they had seen, which she was laughingly giving, when the laugh was strangled in a shriek, as the woman threw her arms wildly aloft dashed at some object in the crowd, then fell lifeless, and was caught by the arms of the astonished bystanders.

In that moment she had beheld, pale as death, but to her eyes as in life, the face of Aaron Franklen. To be continued.

Death a Leveler.—It is very singular how the fact of a man's death often seems to give people a truer idea of his character, whether for good or for evil, than they have ever possessed while he was living and acting among men. Death is so genuine a fact that it excludes falsehood, or betrays its emptiness; it is a touchstone that proves the gold, and dishonors the baser metal. Could the departed, whoever he may be, return in a week after his decease, he would almost invariably find himself at a higher or a lower point than he has formerly occupied on the scale of public appreciation.

HOPE.

BY ALICE CARY.

In the warm sweetness of the air—
The blue-bird twittering on the wing—
The fields, the furrows, everywhere
I see the promise of the Spring.

I see, and rather see than feel,
The softly sovereign reign of May—
Alas, that midway of our years
The Spring of life should pass away!

Alas! yet not alas! for hope,
When blossoms fade and birds take wing,
Still plants her pleasures in the heart
And makes an everlasting Spring.

For when the trees stand black and bare,
And when the clouds are packed with snows,
She makes the winter's face to wear
A daintier color than the rose.

She, when the heart with grief is wrung,
And only listens through its fear,
Can prattle with a sweeter tongue
Than ever sung to mortal ear.

Sick and in prison—faithful still;
The shame, the sorrow she defies;
Fashions her own green world at will,
And builds her own rejoicing skies.

AN OLD TRAPPER'S BEAR STORY.

BY EMERSON BENNETT.

"Some people," said Mr. Stephen Hawkins—as he and a few others of his profession sat, whiskey in hand, around a small deal table, in the smoke-bedimmed bar-room of the Trappers' Inn in St. Louis; "some people has a hate agin one thing, and some other people agin another thing, and I've got a monstrous hate agin one thing myself."

Here Mr. Stephen Hawkins—or "Old Steve," as he was familiarly called by his companions—a genuine specimen of the old-fashioned hunter, trapper, and Rocky Mountain guide—deliberately emptied his glass, called for more whiskey, and began to refill his tobacco-blackened pipe. He was a tall, raw-boned, muscular man of fifty, with a bronzed complexion, small gray eyes, a rather thin, grizzly-bearded face, and was dressed in the regular Western hunter style, with cape-fringed frock, leggins and moccasins.

"Some people," he continued, as he put the short, black stem of his pipe between his teeth, and covered a lighted lucifer with the hollow of his right hand, applying it to the strong tobacco in the bowl of his pipe the moment it took a clear, bright blaze; "some people, I say, has a wicked hate agin Injuns, and can't bear to see the greasy scamps about; then some, I'm told, has it agin tobacker, and wouldn't nyther smoke it, nor chaw it, no more'n ef it was pizen; then thar's other some has it agin licker, and wouldn't drink whiskey ef they's starving, though I can't tell why and what for; but, boys, you jest take all these here hates, and put 'em together and b'ile 'em down, and you don't begin to make sich a hate as I've got agin grizzlys."

With this peculiar climax to his rhetorical effort, Old Steve blew out a heavy cloud of smoke, removed his pipe, and took another drink.

"What's the muss, Steve?" inquired one of the old trapper's companions.

"Wall, hoss, I war jest thinking of the trouble I've had, one time and another, with the darned old grizzlys of the Rocky Mountains. Tell you what it is, boys, ef ever I war bewitched, it's been with them same b'ars, coming at me and poking thar noses into my mess at all sorts of times and places; but I've al'ays fou't 'em as a *man* should fight; and I've killed 'em, too, by scores; and yit the old brutes al'ays will turn up every whar I go. Ef ever I went to shoot a black-tailed deer, I war sure to find a grizzly in my way; ef ever I shot a bighorn, a big grizzly would come and interfere; ef ever I undertook to guide strangers acrost the Rockys, a tarnal grizzly war al'ays plumping into the way to skeer folks; and I've sometimes thought ef ever I should be sculped and go under, it'll be a cussed grizzly that'll hev the honor of seeing the last of old Steve Hawkins. Wagh! I say I hates 'em woss nor pizen—I does—wagh!"

"You've had a good many scrimmages with 'em then, I s'pose?" said one of the party.

"Ax me to drink as many times as I've fou't 'em, and I'll show you the drunkenest man you ever seen," replied the trapper, with an angry shrug.

"S'pose you gin us one of your scrapes!" suggested another.

"Whar'll I begin, Sam?"

"Anywhar; pitch in and don't be too partickelar; gin us the hardest bout you ever fou't."

"Wall, for that matter, they was all hard enough—for a true old ginewine grizzly arn't as easy killed as a butterfly—nary time. Let me see! S'pose, jest for onc't, I gives you the rumantic?"

"What kind of licker is that, old hoss?"

"Licker be derned!" exclaimed the old trapper, with a look of contempt. "Don't you understand the ginewine, natyve American language—hey?"

"He means the romantic," said a bystander, who had drawn near the mountaineers.

"I calls it rum-antic," rejoined old Steve, gravely; "but, in course, any gentleman knows what I means. Thar's a difference in pronunsification, even amon'st schollards, so thar is; but I has my way, and every other hound has hisn. Wagh!"

"Wall, never mind, old beaver, but gin us the story!" exclaimed the one called Sam.

"It jest happened this wise," resumed the narrator, after taking another drink and a few vigorous pulls at his pipe. "You see I got hold of a party at Fort Laramie that wanted to be tuk over the mountains decent; and ef ever thar war a feller fit for that business, that same human war me, Old Steve, and in course I went off with 'em proud. Thar war ten in all, without counting three women, which I al'ays throws in, kase they're of no account nohow, except to holler and make a rumpus ef even a tree-toad squeaks anywhar in hearing. And yit in this case I reckon I ought to count 'em too—leastways one on 'em—for the rumantic comes in with her, it does—and she like to hev spylt my repertation as a guide.

"You see, boys, this here pertickelar female I'm speaking about war young, and purty good looking fur a white gal; and thar war a younker along that 'peared to think a heap of her, which she did the same by him; and in course it turned out, jest as I or any other fool mought hev knowed it would, that they'd git together as often as they could, and along by themselves as often as they could, and that, when they war together and by themselves, they wouldn't think of nothing, nor see nothing, nor know nothing 'cept themselves.

"Wall, one day, as we was jogging slowly along through a purty wild part of the mountains, I seen 'em do what I'd often told 'em they oughten't to do, fall behind on foot; but I didn't say nothing to 'em that time—for I'd made up my mind that ef they war determined to git killed or tuk by Injuns, the best way war to let 'em do it, and larn 'em by experrence, the fools!

"I reckon I'd lost sight of 'em about an hour, when, as the rest of us war slowly winding around through a rocky holler, I heerd a scream that would hev knocked the hind sights off a painter, and the fust scream war followed by a few more that made my hair stand.

"I knowed so'thing awful war up; and grabbing my rifle, I run back along the path we'd come; and about half the men follered me, and t'other half staid to purtect the wagons and the two women, who went right in to dancing regelar jigs and squealing like pigs.

"In two minutes I met the younker, without his gal, as he come hollering towards me, his hat off, his hair flying every which way, and him with his white face looking the skeerdest human I ever seen.

"'What's the muss?' says I.

"'Oh, save her! save her! for God's sake, save her! and I'll give you all I'm wo'th in the world,' says he.

"'Whar is she? and what's got her?' says I.

"'A b'ar,' says he; 'a monstrous big b'ar—a gray old b'ar!'

"'I knowed it!' yelled I; 'I knowed it! I'd hev gambled high on't, I would; them cussed grizzlys has a spite agin me, and they'll be the death of me yit. Travel, you cub,' says I, slinging the younker round, 'and p'int out whar old grizzly fust tukt he gal, or else I'll blow your brains out for lagging behind arter what I've told you, and gitting me into this here scrape.'

"The young scamp put like blazes up the steep hill afore us, and I kept even with him, and t'others panted and grunted up arter us. All at onct he stopped beside a big rock, and said he war standing thar, talking to his gal, when the old b'ar, without nary warning, pounced right onto her, seized her in his teeth, and dragged her away through the bushes up the mountain, and he s'posed she war dead and eat by that time, and he begun to beller about it like a baby.

"'Shut your meat-trap!' says I, hitting him a wipe acrost the mouth—for I war awful mad at the way he'd acted, and the disgrace he'd fotched upon me, and I felt as ef I'd hev to hit so'thing or sp'ile.

"'In course the gal's dead, poor critter!' says one of the t'others, with a loud groan.

"'In course you don't know nothing about it, you persimmon greenhorn!' yelled I; 'and I'll break the jaw of the next hound that opens it to interfere with my business! Ef you want to do the decent thing, any of you, foller me and keep your tongues! or else bolt back to your yelping women, and thar all go to howling together!'

"You see, boys, old Steve's blood war up then—for between the blubbering greenhorn, the lost gal, the owdacious grizzly, and the disgrace of the thing, I felt as ef I war dancing barefoot on live hornets.

"Wall, when I'd said my say, I dove plum into the bushes, on the track of old grizzly, never looking round to see whether t'others war going to foller or not, though I believe they all did. I pushed on through a rayther long thicket, and seen, as I went, pieces of the gal's dress sticking here and thar, which had been torn off by the thorns and brambles as the b'ar dragged her through. I pitied the poor critter, I couldn't help it; but I didn't let on to nobody, for that wouldn't hev done any good; and if she war dead, as I s'pected she mought be, what would be the use of whining over it?

"Arter gitting through the thick bushes, I come out on to a little open flat like, from the t'other side of which thar run up the steep hill a long, narrer, rocky ravine, which the melting snows and rains had gullied out purty deep, and raising my eyes up through this, I diskivered the derned old grizzly varmint sitting down nigh the top, and lolling his red tongue over the poor gal, and poking his nose down to her face, as she lay stretched out quiet at his feet, as ef she war dead, which I s'pected she was, having been hugged tighter by the old scamp than ever her greenhorn of a lover had dared to do. I knowed thar warn't no time to lose, and so I didn't lose none; but drawing up my long rifle, I tuk a quick but steady aim at his head, and fired. The ball hit him, and made him jump and howl, and then, with a loud, savage growl, he left the gal and come tearing down the mountain, right towards me, as ef Old Nick war arter him.

"'Tree! tree! every mother's son of you!' I yelled to the others, some of which war close by, 'or else you'll be made meat on afore you knows what ails you!'

"Sich another yelling and howling and scattering of humans as thar war jest about then, boys, you never seen in your mortal lives, nor me nyther, and down the mountain they all went, lover and all, faster'n old grizzly had ever seen anything run afore, and I thought to myself he mought as well foller a streak of greased lightning as them fellers. As for me, I'd no notion of running fur, for that warn't my style, and I war bound to fotch away the body of that gal, or gin the old brute another carcass to munch for his dinner. Thar war a tall, slender sapling 'bout twenty foot off, big enough for my purpose, and I broke for that, and got fairly out of his reach, with my rifle in hand, afore he got to the foot on't. He hadn't lost sight of me nary once, and 'peared to know (the cunning old beast!) that I war the only human he'd hev to fear; and so, when he come to the tree, he stopped and growled savage, and stood up on his hind feet, and stretched his bloody head up, and put his fore-paws round it, as ef he'd a notion to climb up arter it. But I knowed he couldn't, for the tree war too small for him; and so I continuered to work my way up, jest as ef he warn't thar, till I got to the crotch, when, fixing myself comfortable, I gin a yell of defiance and went to re-loading my rifle.

"Jest as I'd got everything all right, and war wishing the ugly old scamp would step out and give me a fair sight, he begun to walk round the tree and growl, and then, arter a little, he turned back towards the ravine, as if he mought be thinking thar warn't nothing to be made out of me, and he'd go up and take his revenge on the gal.

"Says I, 'Old Grizzly, how's yer left shoulder? and old Steve Hawkins's compliments to you, for an infarnal, oudacious old varmint!' and with them words I sent a bullet to the spot I axed about, and made him a cripple for the rest of his short life.

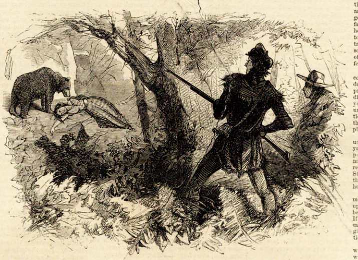
"Good Lord! how he did dance and howl arter that second shot, and hobble round the tree on three legs, praying with all his might, in b'ar language, that he mought be allowed to git at me, ef only for two minutes.

"But it warn't of no use—I warn't agwine to come down for him till I got ready—and so, with a mocking laugh, I loaded up my rifle ag'in, and waited till I got a good chance, and sent the third ball plum through his brain. He fell dead in his tracks. But to make all sure, I slid down the tree and cut his throat, and then went up to see about the poor gal.

"To my surprise I found her living, but with her right shoulder bit bad and mangled, and her right arm broke. She'd fainted from fear and pain, and didn't know nothing, so I raised her up keerful on my back, and toted her down the mountain to her friends, who I found all huddled together in the wagons, and nigh skeered to death, thinking old Bruin war arter 'em. They was all awful glad to find the gal living, and offered to pay me handsome for what I'd done, but I told 'em to keep thar money to buy pluck and sense with, and that the fust feller that said 'bar' to me, I'd break his head. So thar the matter ended.

"The gal arterwards got well, and offered to marry me out of gratitude; but I'd got a Injun squaw wo'th two of her, and I told her so, and that she'd better marry the greenhorn that had run his legs off and yelled his lungs out on her account, and I believe she done so.

"Thar, boys, you've got my rum-antic b'ar story, and now let's licker! Wagh!"



"THE MINISTER."

What a strange vision that phrase calls up in the minds of many grown-up people of the present day! A solemn, stiff, melancholy-looking person, with the blackest of coats and the whitest of cravats, who sincerely believed that religion should walk the earth at a slow, dead-march pace, with dropped eyelids, puckered-up mouth, and a constant bewailing of itself and everything about it. Thank God, in these days "the minister" is a human being. He has stepped off the pedestal where well-meaning, but injudicious narrowness had placed him, and can lay his reverend hand on a child's kite, and show him how to fly it, or toss his ball, or trundle his hoop for him, or accompany him on a pleasure excursion, all the same as if he were not that terrible creature—"a Christian." The children no longer hush their innocent mirth at his approach, or huddle close to the wall to give him a wide berth as he passes, or escape from out the back door of their parents' houses as he enters at the front. His library knowledge is no longer a dead letter, for he disbelieves in children with big heads and narrow chests, who read tracts on their only holiday afternoon, instead of tearing their aprons climbing trees and fences, and otherwise laying a vigorous foundation for future useful years. Out of the hard theological nuts "the minister" *now* cracks, cometh forth sweetness, for in his discourses he remembers the "milk for babes" as well as the strong meat. He knows that religion must have *body* as well as *soul*; that both are equally of God, and that he who underrates the former is not competent to talk about the latter. He does not believe that the lame, the halt and the blind, how loyal soever, are the soldiers to enlist for effective service in the great warfare against the arch-enemy. He believes there is religion in a broad chest, in a bright eye, in a firm tread, and that they who offer but one talent to the Great Steward, instead of the nine that were committed to their keeping, will be held to strict account. Above all, "the minister" of the present day *diffuses* his religion. It is the bright thread that runs through the warp and woof of his raiment, his food, his conversation. Because he smiles at an innocent jest one minute, he need not retire to his oratory to be in a sufficiently holy state of mind to fold the hands of the dying in the next. *His* God is no ascetic. Oh, the difference all this makes to the young creatures of overflowing life, of whose souls he is to give account, and whose every natural instinct is love for the Maker of the beautiful world they gambol in, were it not checked by horrible, petrifying, religion-destroying gloom and fear. Oh, the shadow it lifts from the bright Sundays, when God lets the birds sing and the flowers bloom, and *man alone* lays a chill finger on the dewy lip of the smiling child, with the crushing "*'Tis Sunday!*" Alas, for children of well-meaning but mistaken parents, who only wait for the freedom of man and woman-hood to mark their hatred of a day, which, to all who truly worship, should be the brightest and sweetest of all the seven.

FANNY FERN.

BOTH SIDES.

"Remove everything disagreeable from sight before the husband and father of the family returns to his home at night," is the recommendation of one of those immortal books of advice to the female sex, of which old bachelors and old maids, let us charitably hope, are the authors. Nobody else, surely, could be so lamentably ignorant of the *mutual* obligations of a married couple to make home bright. Nobody else could so persistently ignore the husband's equally binding obligation to "keep everything disagreeable," including too often, alas! his own moods and manner, from the wife whose untiring efforts are so seldom duly appreciated. Men see *results*, but are blameworthy for their chronic blindness to the million and one petty, harassing details, necessary to produce these pleasing results of neatness and order. Taking it as a matter of course, they forget to bestow occasionally the kindly appreciative word which would be such ample solace for the day's labor. It would task an angel's powers to carry out successfully the rules for wives laid down in books like the one from which we have above quoted; or at least it is quite useless to attempt it until husbands themselves are very different from the majority of those *we* meet in our travels. *We believe in laying down no rule of conduct for the wife which will not apply equally to the husband.*

FANNY FERN.

* * *

INSTEAD of regretting that we are sometimes deceived, we should rather lament that we are ever undeceived.

NOTICES TO CORRESPONDENTS.

[All the Questions under this head are actually received by us through the mail. We state this because we learn that many persons have supposed some of them to be *manufactured* for the purpose of adapting the answers to them. They are all genuine, written evidently in good faith, and answered to the best of our ability.]

CURIOSITY.—This correspondent says that there is a young man who attends the same church that she does, and who seems to have "no eyes for any one but her." At first she considered his gaze very impertinent, but at last he conquered, and she "began to watch and long for his coming;" but he, having won her affections in this *glancing* manner, now absents himself from church for two or three months at a time, at which she feels very sorrowful, and wants our opinion of the matter. We think that, if our correspondent, on going to church, would pay more attention to the services, and less to the young gentlemen whom she fancies are admiring her, she would appear to much better advantage, and avoid all this sorrow and heaviness of heart which she feels so grievously.

ANNA.—Do not receive your lover clandestinely, but if your parents, from prejudice, have forbidden your seeing him, wait until you are in a position to marry, and then act your own pleasure.

G. P. V.—A person under twenty-one years of age, whose parents have been naturalized, and who resides in the United States, is a citizen of this country just as if he were born here.

H. M. L.—A gentleman should *not* call upon a lady before being asked to do so. If she desire him to call she will probably give him some intimation of the fact.

SARAH is in love with a young man who also loves her, but her parents oppose their marriage, because, although their daughter is poor, they think she ought to have a rich husband. She wishes to know whether she shall marry the man whom she loves, or give him up and wait for the rich one to make his appearance. Sarah's parents must be very conceited or very ignorant, to indulge in such air-castle anticipations of getting a rich husband for her, and thus despising the pretensions of one who is her equal in social position. They are just the ones to be imposed upon by designing villains, who sport flashy jewelry, wear huge whiskers, and make pretensions to imaginary estates, with unheard-of and unpronounceable titles. They appear to be ignorant of the fact that "rich husbands" seldom make advances for the hand of a poor girl except with dishonorable intentions, and their eyes would probably not be opened until they saw the fruits of their blindness in the disgrace of their daughter. Marry the man you love, be contented with your position, and do not indulge in foolish and chimerical aspirations.

PHILO.—Your questions are not clearly worded. You speak of the young lady as an "acquaintance," and wish to know whether you should write to her, or direct to her young-lady cousins, who desire you to correspond with them. If she is merely an "acquaintance" and you are not engaged, you should not correspond with her or her cousins; but if you are affianced, you should not correspond with other young ladies at all (unless they are your own relatives). You must be your own judge in regard to her cousins reading letters written by you to your sweetheart. If a gentleman is paying his addresses to a young lady, and finds that she is corresponding with other gentlemen, he cannot object unless he is engaged to her, and he must judge for himself whether he will continue his addresses under the former or the latter circumstances.

SALLIE.—This correspondent, who is twenty-four years of age, says she has loved a young man of twenty-seven for four or five years; that she sees him almost every day, and is treated by him with respect, but nothing more; and she wishes to know how to make this obdurate gentleman aware of her passion. It strikes us that a young man who has been acquainted with a young lady for four or five years, and has never declared any passion for her, does not feel any stronger attachment toward her than friendship; and that this young lady had better dismiss her penchant for him as hopeless.

N. K. G.—The Parisian surgeons are supposed to be the most skillful in the world, and students from all nations go to Paris in great numbers for instruction in surgery. We have the impression, however, that no better surgeons have ever lived than the best surgeons of the United States. If we were called upon to undergo a difficult operation, we should not desire to go beyond New York to have it performed. But when you speak of physicians, i. e., men skilled in the science of healing, we presume you are right in saying that Germany bears off the palm.

TWO GIRLS.—No one can say *positively* that the moon is not inhabited; but it is nearly certain that it is not. Through Lord Rosse's great telescope every object on the moon's surface that is as large and high as an ordinary church can be seen distinctly. That instrument reveals to our gaze mountains, extinct volcanos, huge rocks, and universal desolation. There is nothing visible that resembles a house or city, nor is there any water. For these and other reasons, no one now thinks that the moon is inhabited.

FISHER.—In a geographical point of view, the Amazon takes precedence of the Mississippi and of all other rivers. In depth and volume of water, no other river can compare with it. Including its branches, it furnishes 50,000 miles of stream navigable for the largest vessels, and its basin comprehends two millions of square miles, or two-fifths of the whole continent of America. The main reason why South America is so thinly inhabited is, that nature there works on a scale so prodigious as to frustrate the puny efforts of man.

IGNORAMUS.—It certainly is not true that superior men are generally men of large stature. On the contrary, an extraordinary number of historical persons, such as Julius Cæsar, Napoleon, Nelson, Alexander Hamilton, were undersized. If we may judge from our own reading and observation, we should say that men remarkable for activity, promptness, enterprize, and endurance, are generally short; but that men formed for thought, rather than for action, are very frequently tall of stature, and of ample proportions.

JONES.—The word Minnié is not pronounced Minny, but Min-ne-ay. The accent over the final letter makes the word one of three syllables. The rifle so named was invented by M. Minnié, who entered the French army as a private and rose to the rank of colonel. He completed the invention of his rifle about the year 1833, but it was not generally used out of France until the Crimean war gave it celebrity.

SEYMOUR.—The officers of the English custom houses are not generally very strict in examining the baggage of travellers from America. They keep a pretty sharp look-out for tobacco and cigars, and seize without remorse every American reprint of an English copy-righted book. But articles designed for presents, such as curiosities, sets of jewelry, and daguerreotypes, are almost always passed without delay or charge.

STUDENT.—Yes, very small natural magnets have been, and are occasionally, found in the United States. The chief sources of supply are the iron mines of Sweden and Norway. Magnets are also found in the island of Elba, in Arabia, China, Siam, and the Phillipine Islands. The magnets used in compasses are always artificial, as they can be made more powerful than natural ones.

C. P. V.—Here is a scoundrel who has engaged himself to marry two young ladies, and now asks us how he shall get out of the scrape. And the worst of it is, that he offered himself to the second lady because she was rich. The only honorable thing that remains for him to do is to confess his villainy, and deliver both girls from the nuisance of ever seeing his face again.

MIDDLETOWN.—The corner-stone of the north wing of the Capitol at Washington was laid by Gen. Washington, September 16th, 1793. The architect was a Frenchman, named Pierre C. L'Enfant. Congress met in the Capitol, for the first time, November 17th, 1800, during the presidency of John Adams.

ILLINOIS.—A volunteer soldier is not entitled to a tract of land at the end of his period of service, unless a special act of Congress has been passed granting such a reward.

FOUR BOYS.—These young gentlemen have been reading Mr. Irving's Life of Washington, and desire to know why the author does not relate the story of the hatchet and the fruit tree, which has been told of young Washington in every other biography. The reason, we presume, was, that the story rests upon insufficient authority. It was first told in print by the Rev. M. L. Weems, an eccentric Episcopal clergyman, who wrote a little biography of Gen. Washington about fifty years ago. Mr. Weems was one of those writers who draw upon their imagination for their facts, and who think it lawful to relate any anecdote, whether true or false, provided only it redounds to the glory of their subject. He names no authority for his stories; and, as he tells many things which are now known to be false, no writer of the present day is justified in regarding Weems as a source of information. Nevertheless, the hatchet story probably had a basis of truth, which Weems expanded into the narrative referred to by our correspondents. He says that it was told to him by "an aged lady who was a distant relative, and when a girl spent much of her time in the family." The main reason for rejecting the stories related by Weems is this: He tells them with a detail of minute circumstances, and with long conversations, which could not possibly have been remembered. For example, in his Life of Franklin, he reports conversations, several pages in length, which occurred between Franklin and his father, seventy or eighty years before he wrote; nay, conversations between Franklin's father and mother when they were in bed. Mr. Irving was certainly justified in passing by everything which rested only on the authority of a writer capable of such feats as those.

JOHANNES.—We do not agree with you about the weather on the lakes. The truth with regard to weather everywhere is, that its irregularity is only apparent; in reality, it is more regular than a patent chronometer. If you will keep a weather diary for a few years, comparing each day, week, month and season with corresponding ones of previous years, you will never again call the weather capricious. You will find that the average temperature, the quantity of rain and snow, the number of fine days and wet days, the number of gales of wind and of thunder storms, are almost exactly the same every year. Every year you will have to record the extreme cold in the early part of January; the January thaw; the hot days at the end of February; the blustering winds of March; the light showers of April; the warm weather near the end of April; the cold first of May; the long North-East storm following it; the beautiful weather succeeding; the chilly first or second of June; the intensely hot June days; the chilly time about the first of July; and so on throughout the year. We can almost say, that every marked circumstance of the weather occurs every year at about the same time. In fact, it is the regularity of the weather, far more than its irregularity, that astonishes those who keep a record of its changes. Have you never observed, that the weather has a weekly circuit? Have you never noticed a half a dozen successive Sundays of precisely the same weather? You will find, if you keep a record, that a storm of rain or snow is about one week in forming.

C. W. T.—We have many correspondents who are desirous of knowing the qualifications requisite in a person to enable him to enter the military academy at West Point, and what course to pursue in order to obtain an appointment. For the benefit of all such, we give the following statement: He must be between the ages of fourteen and twenty-one, and be well versed in reading, writing and arithmetic. He must also sign articles, with the consent of his parents or guardian, engaging to serve for eight years, unless sooner discharged. The appointments are all made by the President, upon the recommendation of the Representatives from the different congressional districts. You must therefore apply to the Member of Congress from your district, and if there is a vacancy at the academy which your district is entitled to fill, he will procure you the appointment. The number of cadets is limited to one from each congressional and territorial district, one from the district of Columbia, and ten appointed at large by the President, so that no new appointment can be made until a vacancy occurs. While at the academy the cadets receive $30 per month for their expenses, are in camp three months in the year, and instructed in everything pertaining to military science. On graduating, they are transferred to corps in the regular army, usually with the rank and pay of brevet lieutenant.

NORTH says he is engaged to a young lady, and both being quite young, they have wisely concluded to wait awhile before consummating their happiness at the altar. In the meantime, they are prudently considering their resources and laying their plans for the future. North "is a farmer boy with fair prospects in that line," while his intended "is the daughter of a tradesman, and therefore unacquainted with a farmer's life." The point is, that our correspondent prefers to continue his present occupation, while the young lady prefers to have him study law, for "she considers him perfectly capable of occupying a more public position." This is her preference, but if he insists she will share the farmer's toils and pleasures with him. Now, as he does not wish to be arbitrary in the matter, he appeals to us for our opinion. It strikes us that you had better continue your farming, which is one of the most independent, pleasant, and honorable occupations which a person can follow. As for studying law, we wouldn't advise any one, unless possessed of the most superior talents, to undertake that profession, for there are more lawyers now than there are clients to give them all a livelihood. Stay upon your farm, devote yourself to its improvement, cultivate your mind, and you will live much more happily and contentedly than you would if you embarked in professional life.

ELDREDGE.—Lord Byron left the bulk of his estate to his sister, Mrs. Leigh, and her children. But this is not to be understood as a proof of hostility to his wife and daughter. He says expressly in his will that he leaves his property to his sister and her children because his "dear wife, Lady Byron," and her child are provided for. His property amounted, we believe, to not less than half a million dollars, which was considered a small fortune for a man of his rank. He left to his executors, Mr. Hobhouse and Mr. Hanson, a thousand pounds each. In reply to your second question, we must say that Lord Byron did *not* give up his wife's fortune when he found that their separation was final. Mr. Moore, the biographer of Byron, says he *meant* to do so, and vowed never to touch it for his own use, but that he had not the fortitude and magnanimity to keep his vow. Her fortune was ten thousand pounds.

DESPAIR.—This foolish fellow says he has been waiting for years for something *to turn up*, that should make him rich and enable him to marry a certain young lady, or, at least, give him courage to propose to her. But nothing has turned up, or seems likely to turn up, and now he is in terror lest some one else should bear off the girl on whom his heart is fixed. We recommend our correspondent to study the character and career of the celebrated Micawber. That entertaining person waited long for something to turn up, but nothing ever would or did turn up, until Micawber went to work, with all his might and main, for Mr. Uriah Heep. Before he had pursued that course many months an opportunity occurred for him to cover himself with glory; which opportunity being improved led to his making a fortune in Australia. Nothing but disappointment ever comes from this waiting for something to turn up. Go to work.

GABE.—We learn from this correspondent that the ancient custom of "barring out" the teacher, when the pupils want a holiday, still prevails in Maryland. He says that, on a late occasion, a portion of the pupils in his school, preferring to continue their studies, sided with the teacher, and aided him to force an entrance into the school-house. In the scuffle a number of panes of glass were broken and other damage was done. The question now is, which party ought to pay for the damage, the party who barred out the teacher, or those who opposed the barring out? The barring out faction, we should say. The custom of barring out is barbarous and stupid. We supposed it was abolished long ago.

VISITOR.—This inquirer, a native of Quebec, asks why it is necessary in New York to cover tin roofs with paint in order to prevent their rusting, while in Canada tin roofs, though unpainted, never rust. It is common in Canada, he says, to cover the spires of churches with tin, and after a hundred years of exposure they stand clean and glittering like silver. The reason is, that in Quebec and Montreal there is no salt air to corrode the tin. New York, surrounded by salt water, and situated but a few miles from the ocean itself, is pervaded by salt air, which will begin to consume tin after an exposure of only a few days.

CLERK.—If you have a thorough knowledge of the principles of English grammar, and can analyze and parse correctly, we would advise you to read the works of the best English prose writers, noticing carefully their style of composition, and occasionally analyzing sentences to observe their construction. In this manner you will combine literary profit with grammatical improvement. If you wish to devote a portion of your time to the study of rhetoric, it matters little what author you choose.

M. P.—If you will state your questions again in a clear and concise manner, we will endeavor to answer them. Simply referring us for them to a letter of a former date which we may not have received, will not enable us to find them.

⁂ *Several letters stand over to be answered in our next.*